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DECEMBER 19, 2019

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Season's Greetings

Santa listens to three-year-old Ariel Campbell at Light the Night in Cardiff on Dec. 7. The evening included fireworks, an open fire, delicious treats and a chance to catch up with neighbours. See more on page 3. /DARREN LUM Staff

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County Life

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For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

Sending holiday greetings!

KATE BUTLER

Special to *County Life*

Around this time of year, history enthusiasts just can't seem to resist sharing images of what are often referred to as "bizarre Victorian Christmas cards." From our perspective today, the imagery is unusual to say the least. One which caught my eye this year featured a mouse hitching a ride on the back of a lobster! Others might feature dancing insects, strangely anthropomorphic animals and foods, disturbing snowmen or even dead birds. Not exactly our usual holiday fodder, so what on earth was going on?

The Victorians are often credited with creating Christmas as we celebrate it today, but that doesn't mean it emerged fully formed in one fell swoop. In the 1840s, the commercially produced Christmas card was brand-new. Though certainly people had previously sent greetings of the season to one another, it was generally a custom of the wealthy who were more likely to be able to read and write and who had the disposable income to be able to send such greetings.

In the 1840s, the "penny post" was introduced in Britain, thanks to the sudden prevalence of railways and the freight they could carry, but in the beginning this new affordable way to send mail was underutilized. Enter Sir Henry Cole, an enterprising civil servant who partnered with his friend, artist John Horsley, to create the first Christmas cards which they sold for a schilling each. They were advertised as showing a picture "emblematical of old English festivity" – a drawing of a family enjoying a holiday meal. The 1,000 printed cards sold quickly and the Christmas card industry looked set to take off. So, where do the "unusual" cards fit in? In short, it was an industry that was trying to figure out how to do what it was trying to do. Cole's reference to "old English festivity" holds one of the keys. The Victorians weren't necessarily inventing how we celebrate Christmas; they were also connecting with earlier traditions which had fallen out of favour or been driven underground during more puritanical eras in British history.

As for decoding these early cards, they sometimes came with a moral undercurrent. The ones showing the birds, for instance, may have served as a metaphor for the plight of poor children who were living out on the street. The Victorian era was one of growing social conscience, as works like Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol* show. The holidays were seen more than ever before as a time to look after those who were less fortunate than oneself, a sentiment that continues to this day. As for the cards showing walking, talking Christmas puddings…we may just have to put that down to the learning curve in a new trend!

Though Victorian cards might look unusual to us, can you imagine what Victorians would make of our greetings today? What might they make of an e-card or Christmas wishes on social media? Probably they'd understand the intent, but find it a little bizarre! As busy as our lives have become, I think we'd all agree that there's something that's lovely about receiving a handwritten greeting in the post, so I hope you'll take some time to send a few old-fashioned cards this season and as we head into the New Year. On behalf of the Haliburton Highlands Museum, I'd like to wish you and yours all the very best for the holiday season! Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a few more envelopes to address…

Songs of the season

The Highlands Festival singers, directed by Melissa Stephens, performed a variety of festive songs to a packed house at their We Need a Little Christmas! concert at the Haliburton United Church on Sunday, Dec. 1. December has been packed with festive events, including plenty of opportunities to sing along to Christmas favourites. /CHAD INGRAM Staff

Cardiff brightens the night

Children play in the snow at The Light the Night in Cardiff event on Saturday, Dec. 7 by the Cardiff Dragonfly sculpture. The event included refreshments, a visit with Santa, the warmth of an open fire and fellowship. / DARREN LUM Staff

The sky above Cardiff was illuminated by fireworks following the tree lighting ceremony.

Baked Brie with Pear Cranberry Chutney

A festive cheesy dish for the holiday season, perfect for sharing! Your guests will have fun pulling this appetizer apart and dipping the crispy puff pastry into the gooey, warm Brie. The pear and cranberry chutney pairs perfectly with the Brie.

Preparation Time: 15 minutes
Cooking Time: 10 minutes
Baking Time: 25 minutes
Serves 12

Chutney:
1 Ontario Pear, diced
1/2 cup (125 mL) Ontario cranberries
1/4 cup (50 mL) diced Ontario onion
2 tsp (10 mL) granulated sugar
1/2 tsp (2 mL) each salt and pepper
1/4 tsp (1 mL) ground ginger

Brie:
1 sheet (225 g) frozen butter puff pastry, thawed and refrigerated
200 g round Ontario Brie
1 Ontario egg, beaten
Ontario pears, sliced (about 2)

Chutney: In medium saucepan, combine pear, cranberries, onion, sugar, salt, pepper and ginger. Cook over medium heat, for 10 minutes, stirring often to prevent burning. Remove from heat; set aside to cool.

Brie: On lightly floured surface unfold the pastry; place cheese in centre. Cut circle about 2-inches (5 cm) larger than the cheese. Set aside pastry scraps for decoration. Spoon cooled chutney on top of cheese, reserving 1 tbsp (15 mL). Brush egg on pastry seams. Fold pastry up over the cheese and chutney to cover. Press to seal; trim any excess pastry. Place onto parchment paper-lined baking sheet seam side up.

Make decorations or decorate with the pastry scraps; use a cookie cutter if desired. Brush pastry with egg. Bake in 400°F (200°C) oven 25 minutes or until pastry is golden brown. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Top with reserved chutney. Serve with pear slices and pastry decorations.

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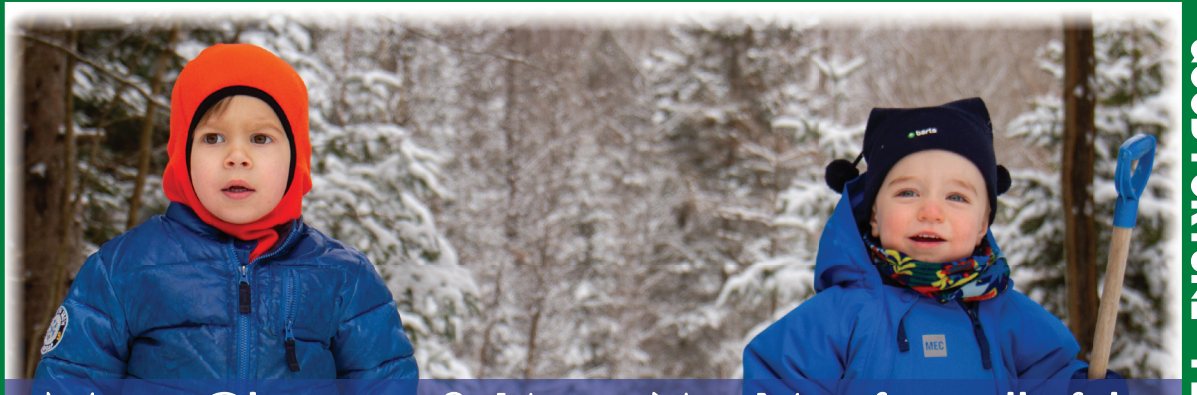

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Couple creates winter wonderland

JENN WATT
County Life Editor

A gingerbread-like house shines through the night on the Clevelands' property at 1948 Unicorn Road south of Haliburton village. The couple says they're happy to have people park at the bottom of their driveway and check out the display. They are considering collecting donations for the food bank for those who stop by. /JENN WATT Staff

Atop a snowy hill on Unicorn Road sits a home alive with light. Glowing reindeer lead the way to the Clevelands' home, which shines like a wintry gingerbread house guarded by two glowing nutcrackers.

More than 8,000 lights hang from trees and illuminate a Christmas wonderland carefully planned by St. Clair Cleveland.

St. Clair and his wife Diana have been celebrating the "season of light" for nearly 50 years, taking their penchant for colour wherever they go, first in Hamilton and Burlington and now in Haliburton.

"In the city we always had our whole property all lit up," says Diana over a cup of hot apple cider with St. Clair seated at her side.

"He usually thinks about it over the summer and he builds something new [each year]," she says.

The couple explains that Diana decorates inside the house and St. Clair takes care of the outside.

Installation of the lights begins in October because of just how much time and effort it takes to put it all together. And although their home and yard is already awash in light, they say there are still "boxes and boxes of lights that haven't gone up yet."

They've added the music of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, with lights programmed to flicker and flash in time, to make for a more immersive experience.

Neighbours have noticed the display and come to check it out, but the Clevelands say they're happy to welcome more people. They've cleared space at the bottom of the driveway for cars to park and plan to put out a bin for food bank donations.

Their lights are on as soon as it gets dark until about 10 or 10:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Once it gets closer to Christmas, they say they'll keep them on every night.

Diana and St. Clair Cleveland sit beside the hearth in their festive home.

The couple also wonder why the town of Haliburton doesn't install a light display in Head Lake Park, which they think could attract visitors.

"You have this big, beautiful park and you don't decorate it," St. Clair says. "... It's a beautiful area to do it. It's perfect."

Although he says he'd be happy to lend a hand if the Municipality of Dysart et al ever decides to light up the park, for now he's concentrating on his own property, and next year. Perhaps a carousel that moves, putting lights into motion, if he can find a way to deal with high winds, he says. Certainly, something "way bigger."

The Clevelands' house is at 1948 Unicorn Road, south of Haliburton. From Haliburton, follow Mountain Street out of the village until it turns into Unicorn Road.

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Send your letters to the editor to jenn@haliburtonpress.com. Letters must be signed and include a phone number.

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Twelve scenes of the holidays

MARCI MANDEL
Way of Wonder

WHEN WE LIVED on a water-access-only lake, to get in and out when the ice wasn't safe, my husband and I would hike through the untamed bush. Our fondest memories are entertaining ourselves singing Christmas carols and trying to remember the words to *The 12 Days of Christmas*. Was that 11 lords a leaping, 10 pipers piping or was that 11 pipers piping and 10 lords a leaping? It was a 45-minute hike so we had lots of time to play with the lyrics. Now we live in a passivhaus on a hundred acres, on a road, and go for walks on trails we ourselves made. We do it for exercise and for love – love for each other and love for the land. We take turns leading and following and talking and listening. It's what we love. And though we no longer test our memory with *The 12 Days*, we do appreciate the many scenes the holidays offer. Perhaps you can relate to these 12:

1. The first sign the holidays were upon us came the morning of Dec. 1 when we woke to photos from our kids and their families of beautifully decorated Christmas trees. Isn't it wonderful to have this symbol of enchantment and joy fill a space in the living room for this, the darkest month?

2. Dec. 1 is also the day advent calendars begin and for the last few years, my sister-in-law has gifted us with the Jacquie Lawson Cotswold advent calendar. It's a step back in time to a mountain village with horses, St. Bernards, an enormous decorated tree at the centre of town, and a charming, new activity to do every day. What a delight.

3. Ladies' Nights are always entertaining in Haliburton County. Not only are the discounts fun but so are the invited vendors with surprise gifts. And when your feet are sore, a shared meal with friends certainly puts a smile on your face.

4. Snow has come early again and the crystal laden grasses and snow dusted evergreen branches make our morning walks a wonder to behold.

5. We used to acquire our tree in the forest or at the grocery store, but there is nothing as beautiful as a Fraser fir from Abbey Gardens. Eight feet tall, perfectly symmetrical and so full, it's just breathtaking – even before it's decorated.

6. Grandchildren bring us such joy, even when, or is that especially when, they want to make the gingerbread house first thing in the morning. One candy for the gingerbread house, one candy for each of them. Ha ha ha.

7. Elf on the Shelf has become a new tradition. The doll comes with a book (originally published in 2005) about an elf that comes to your house during the day to watch if you're naughty or nice and returns to Santa at night to report back. Parents love it to keep the kids in line and also to challenge their creativity. Each day they have to create a new scene for the kids to find in the morning, like Elf playing cards with other stuffies, Elf riding in a toy car, or Elf sliding down the banister in a slipper. It's been a whimsical addition to the season.

8. Going to the Camp Wanakita Christmas breakfast is another wonderful community event: full breakfast, petting zoo, cookie and ornament decorations, and of course a visit with Santa. How lucky we are the camp puts this on at no charge for all to enjoy. What a gift!

Sweetness is only one side of the story this time of year. To get the complete picture, to reap the fullness of the season, it is helpful to not only appreciate the joyful moments but to also acknowledge the flip side of the coin: the grief.

9. For some, the holiday season can be overwhelming, and instead of the joy of shopping, baking, and wrapping, the running and chasing and sleepless nights can bring on anxiety. Mental health can be a challenge with so many expectations playing out and surrounding us.

10. While some of us are fortunate to be surrounded by healthy family members, others are grieving the loss of a dear one, the onset of an illness, or the agony of loneliness. What a difficult time to bear this.

11. Home plays a central role this time of year. My heart goes out to all those, near and far, who have been uprooted and displaced. Conflict in the world – conflict in our heart – is shattering.

12. 2019 has been the year Mother Earth's cry has been gut wrenchingly loud. The wildfires, sea level rise, and extreme weather events remind me of a cornered animal attacking back with all its might. What have we done? What have we done?

Our emotions intensify this time of year. Thank goodness we have songs we can sing together to release the joy and the grief. And even if we don't have a song, we always have our voice to howl at the wonder of it all.

May the returning light radiate warmth and comfort to us all – and may we deeply receive it.

To life!

Comments: whitetrail@outlook.com

It is better to. . .

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

THIS TIME of year we often hear the phrase "it is better to give than to receive." That's a noble sentiment. The problem is it does not apply to everything. For example, it is clearly better to receive a million dollars in cash than to give it away.

With that in mind, here are 10 things that do apply to that phrase.

1. Kale: If ever there was a thing that it is better to give than receive, it is kale.
2. The common cold.
3. Any invoice.
4. A litter of baby skunks.
5. Homework assignments.
6. Stink eye.
7. A piece of your mind.
8. An opportunity to do the dishes.
9. Tickets to an amateur violin recital.
10. A wedgie

N and S

The snow was thick in Miner's Bay;
by Norland there was none
Lindsay town had brown leaves still;
Toronto was full sun
On shiny spires, a condo sea, illuminated Oz
White flakes had yet to fasten here, its furnace
warm because

That heartbeat runs on people and it pulses
by the lake
A city ticks a different clock to keep folk more awake
And though Toronto held me once in glory
days of yore

And though I like its cultures and its green
space by the shore

It's north where heartbeat's softer and where all light
seems more real
My compass snaps to N now, since the S lacks
wilder feel
So up to Hali I return, the snow makes magic here
It's cold, yes, but it twinkles so, and keeps my childhood near

By Deborah J Reed

Christmas tree poems

by Gr.4 and 5 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Carols
Hot chocolate
Reindeer
Icicles
Stocking
Tree
Mistletoe
Angels
Snowflakes

By Jayla Bird, Grade 5

Candy cane
Hot chocolate
Reindeer
Icicles
Snowflakes
Traditions
Mistletoe
Angel
Santa

By Allie Grant, Grade 4

Candy cane
Hat
Reindeer
Ice skates
Sleep, Santa is coming
To give you treats on this tradition
Mistletoe
Angel
Singing songs

By Erynn Card, Grade 4

Chocolate chip cookies
Happy Holidays
Reindeer
Icicles
Santa
Treats
Merry
Angel
Snowman

By Alexis Feero, Grade 4

Celebration, candy cookies, Christmas
Holiday, hat, hot chocolate, ho ho ho, happy, hockey
Reindeer, Rudolph, rooftop
Icicles, imagination, ice skates
Santa, stocking, snow,
Treats, tree, tinsel
Merry, music, magic, mistletoe
Angels, amazing, antlers
Snowman, snowflakes, snow globe, singing

By McCartney Saunders, Grade 4

Christmas
Hope
Reindeer
Icicles
Snowy
Treats
Merry
Angels
Snowman

By Payton McRae, Grade 5

Cookies
Holly
Rooftop
Icicles
Santa
Tree
Manger
Angel
Snow

By Ryan Greer, Grade 4

Cookies
Hot chocolate
Rudolph
Icicles
Secrets
Treats
Mistletoe
Angel
Snowflakes

By Addy Davidson, Grade 4

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By selecting lease or finance offers, consumers are foregoing this credit which will result in higher effective cost of credit on their transaction. Credit is calculated on vehicle MSRP (which excludes vehicle freight), excluding any dealer-installed options. Credit value will vary with model purchased: models receiving up to 25% of MSRP Cash Purchase Credit are: Sierra 1500 Limited. ~Offer available to qualified retail customers in Canada for vehicles purchased and delivered between December 2 – January 3, 2020. Lease based on suggested retail price of $34,288, towards the lease of an eligible 2020 Terrain SLE FWD Elevation. Bi-weekly payment is $185 for 48 months at 1% lease rate (1% APR) on approved credit to qualified retail customers by GM Financial. The $93 weekly payment is calculated by dividing the bi-weekly payments. Payments cannot be made on a weekly basis. Equivalent weekly payments are for informational purposes only. Annual kilometer limit of 20,000 km, $0.16 per excess kilometer. $0 down payment required. Payment may vary depending on down payment trade. Total obligation is $19,175. Taxes, license, insurance, registration and applicable fees, levies, duties and, except in Quebec, dealer fees (all of which may vary by dealer and region) are extra. Option to purchase at lease end is $16,115. Factory order may be required. ¤ Safety or driver assistance features are no substitute for the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner. The driver should remain attentive to traffic, surroundings and road conditions at all times. Visibility, weather, and road conditions may affect feature performance. Read the vehicle Owner's Manual for more important feature limitations and information. ΩWhichever comes first. Limit of four complimentary Lube-Oil-Filter services in total. Fluid top-offs, inspections, tire rotations, wheel alignments and balancing, etc., are not covered. See the Warranty Booklet or your dealer for details. ∞ Whichever comes first. See your dealer. Δ Visit onstar.ca for vehicle availability, coverage maps, details and system limitations. Services and connectivity vary by model and conditions as well as geographical and technical restrictions. 4G LTE service available in select markets. Requires active connected vehicle services and a data plan to access the vehicle's built-in Wi-Fi hotspot. Accessory Power must be active to use the Wi-Fi hotspot. Data plans provided by AT&T or its local service provider. Credit card is required for purchase.

Christmas tree poems

by Gr.4 and 5 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Cookies, chimney
Ho ho ho, holiday, hat
Rudolph, rooftop
Icicles, ice skates
St. Nick, sleigh, Santa
Treats, tree, turkey
Merry, Mrs. Claus
Angel, amazing
Songs, snowflakes

By Rayah Garbutt, Grade 4

Candy cane
Holiday
Rudolph
Icicles
Secrets
Tree
Mrs. Claus
Angel
Snow

By Landon Hurl, Grade 5

Carols
Hot chocolate
Reindeer
Icicles
Sleigh
Tree
Mistletoe
Antlers
Snowman

By Mya Casey, Grade 4

Chimney
Happy holidays
Rooftop
Icicles
Santa Claus
Treats
Merry Christmas
Angel
Singing

By Kevin Jones, Grade 4

Cookies
Holly
Reindeer
Imagination
Santa
Tree
Merry Christmas
Angel
Silent Night

By Rylee Doige, Grade 4

Claus
Hat
Rooftop
Ice skates
Santa
Treats
Merry Christmas
Antlers
Snowman

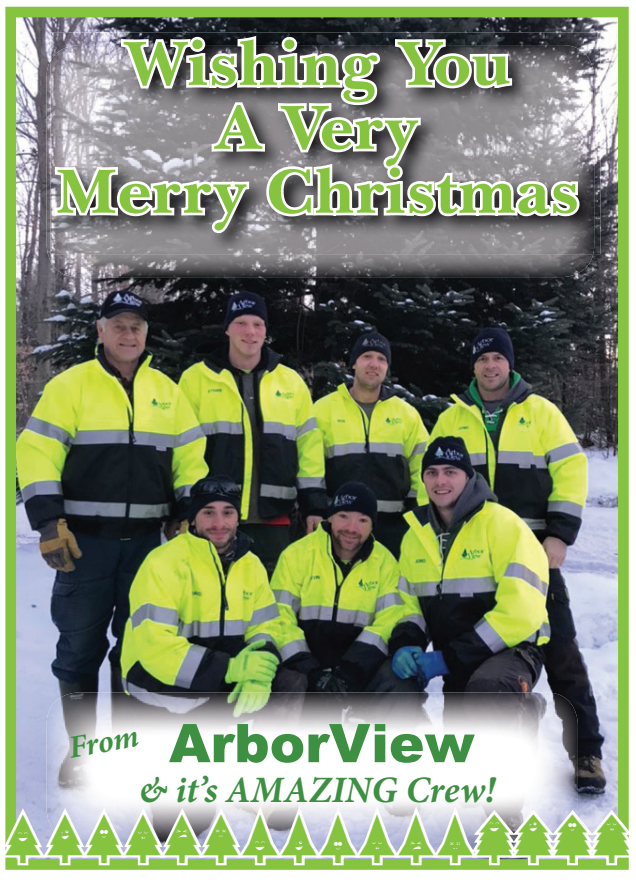
By Jake Mantle, Grade 5

Celebration
Happy
Reindeer
Ice skates
Sleep
Tree
Mrs. Claus
Angel
Snow

By Emily Miller, Grade 5

Candy Cane
Hot chocolate
Reindeer
Ice skates
Santa
Tree
Mass
Angel
Songs

By Hudson Turner, Grade 4



Artwork by students at Stuart Baker Elementary School

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CODE: $10_GCCL_19

$20 BONUS

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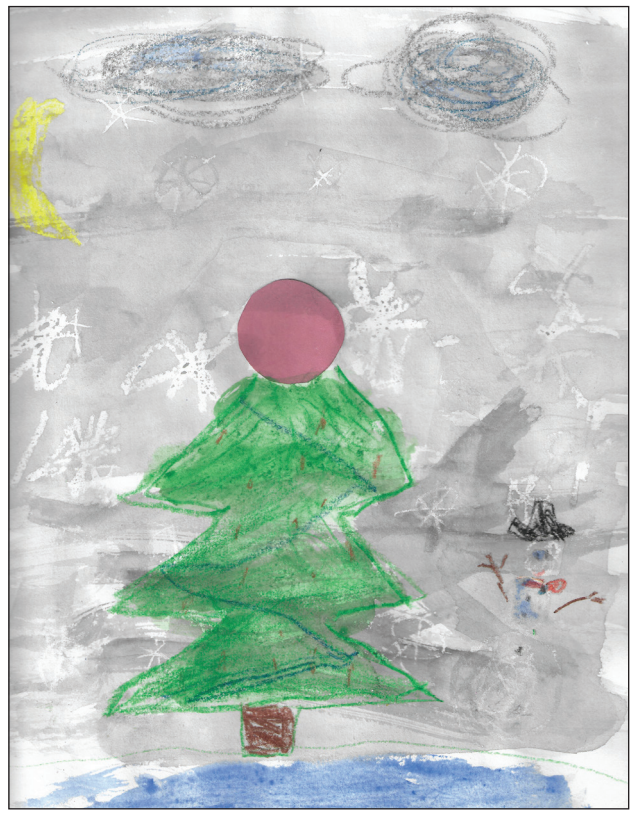
Two discounted gift card per customer. Can not be combined with other offers.

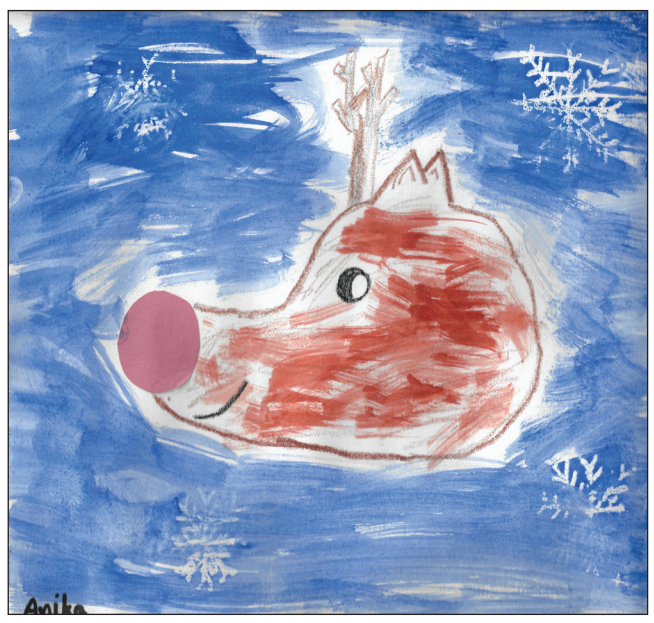
Expires December 24th 2019.

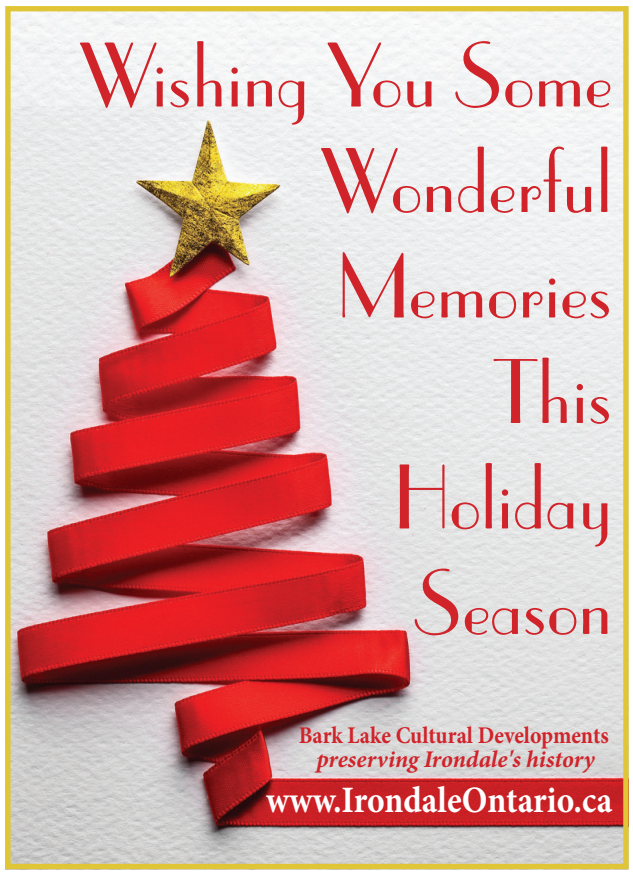
CODE: $20_GCCL_19

Watercolour and crayon artwork

by Grade 2 and 3 students from Stuart Baker Elementary School







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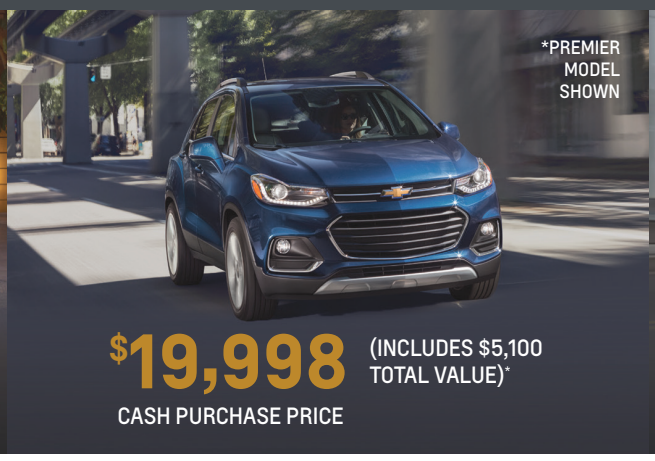

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By selecting lease or finance offers, consumers are foregoing this $5,100 credit which will result in higher effective interest rates. Offer may not be combined with certain other consumer incentives. ΩWhichever comes first. Limit of four complimentary Lube-Oil-Filter services in total. Fluid top-offs, inspections, tire rotations, wheel alignments and balancing, etc., are not covered. See the Warranty Booklet or your dealer for details. ∞ Whichever comes first. ΔVisit onstar.ca for vehicle availability, coverage maps, details and system limitations. Services and connectivity vary by model and conditions as well as geographical and technical restrictions. 4G LTE service available in select markets. Requires active connected vehicle services and a data plan to access the vehicle's built-in Wi-Fi hotspot. Accessory Power must be active to use the Wi-Fi hotspot. Data plans provided by AT&T or its local service provider. Credit card is required for purchase.

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Letters to Santa

by Gr.3 and 4 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Dear Santa,

I think I have been helpful this year.

I made dinner for mom and dad. I have made spaghetti, apple raspberry crisp, mac and cheese, and eggs. I like making food.

I help out at my neighbour's houses. In the winter, I go and shovel a lady's deck. When my other neighbour's granddaughters come up, I help with them.

The oldest is two and the youngest is close to one.

I watch my sister when dad is in the garage. I play games with Keetyn.

That is why I think I have been helpful. Can you please bring presents to my house?

Love Adiya Mills

Dear Santa,

Santa, I have been a good boy this year.

I have been reading chapter books with mom and doing the laundry so I can have clean clothes.

I play with Tenley by keeping the balloon off of the ground. I play with Tenley so she can have fun.

I carry wood in for Ritchie. I bring wood in and it is heavy. I pile up the wood when it is in my basement.

This is why I should get presents.

Love Vanek Logan

Dear Santa,

I have been nice this year. I've been helping people make snow forts. I get the walkie-talkie for Ms. Kampstra. I'm doing more work at school. I make sure I do my homework every night.

I break snow to give to the people building the fort. This helps them build faster.

Ms. Kampstra forgets to get the walkie-talkie so it's my job to get it. Sometimes there isn't one.

I'm doing more work at school so I get more breaks.

Ms. Kampstra gives me books to read every night to read with my mom. It's fun to read with mom.

These are the reasons why I think I should get five nights at Freddy's Toys.

Love Cole Brooks

Dear Santa,

I have been a good girl this year.

I have helped many people in my class with work. I always help one student with her math and some other stuff too. I also help other people in my class.

I take care of my brother sometimes when my grandma is gone for a couple of minutes. Before I go to school, my grandma goes to the grocery store quickly to get us Lunchables.

The last thing I do is clean my classroom for my teacher. I clean the desks, floor, and the chalkboard.

These are some of the reasons that I'm a good girl. I would like another Elf On The Shelf please.

Love Mackenzie Milburn

Dear Santa,

I have been a good girl this year. I have helped my mom with the dishes and making her bed. Also, I help my mom with the sweeping when she is gone somewhere.

I have helped my dad with shovelling the deck and also packing if we go somewhere.

I help my brother by making his bed. I also watch all of his kids. His kids are little so I help most of the time.

The way I help my sisters is I watch their kids a lot. Also, I get food for them. I get them snacks.

So that is all of the nice stuff I have done this year. That is why I should not get coal this year.

Love Breanna Upton

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A lifelong passion for Christmas

SUE TIFFIN
County Life Staff

If it's December, you can be sure Adam Thorn is listening to Christmas music.

"Fresh FM Radio, they switch over to Christmas music and play it for the entire month, with no other music, and that is the only station I listen to," he said, laughing.

While working for Algonquin Highlands township, he said as he was plowing and patrolling, it was festive music for him out on the streets.

"I would just have that cranked in the truck, and I'd be driving around the roads cleaning them up, dancing away in the truck to it," he said.

Even Thorn's own playlist on his phone, he said, which includes about five days' worth of music, has some Christmas music mixed throughout it.

"That's the biggest downfall for me at Christmas time, I think [the station's seasonal theme] stops Boxing Day," he said. "And then the Christmas music is over. It's just like cold turkey and then you have to suffer until the next year."

Now operations manager at the township, Thorn has a reputation for having holiday spirit, dressing up for Halloween, even Valentine's Day.

"There's no reason why we can't have a smile on our face while we work, or can't laugh," he said. "We're still getting our work done, but let's lift the spirits. It doesn't have to be anything crazy, just a little festive, that's all."

Recently during an impromptu office tree decorating, Thorn encouraged everyone in the building to take a moment to put an ornament on the tree at the front reception desk.

"Everyone got to put a Christmas ornament on to feel like we're part of a big family," he said.

Thorn acknowledges his strong passion for Christmas isn't much different than his interest in baseball. He just happens to love the holiday, and has since he was a young child.

"It comes down to Grandma at the end of the day," he said. He remembers seeing Christmas displays when his grandma, Bernice Lyddiatt, took him shopping, and a huge Christmas tree she had on display in the corner of the lodge at Silver Birches Resort on South Lake, with presents stacked "five feet out all the way around" for a family celebration.

"I can remember going to Grandma's house, and she would give us presents to wrap them," he said. "We would wrap all her presents for other people."

Now, he teaches his kids how to wrap, laughing that he might have more wrapping skills than his wife, joking: "it's difficult for me when I see her wrapping."

A ceramic village that his grandma had set up in her window now is kept by Thorn, his one request after her passing, and his kids and family continue to buy him additions to the scene.

Though in his firefighting past Thorn has had to leave his family on Christmas Day to attend structure fires and medical emergencies, he usually focuses on family that day, as he did in his youth.

"That has always been for me despite what was going on in all of our lives, that was the day we all got together, nobody cared about what else was going on, and it was us just opening presents and playing with the kids and all that stuff. Really, that's where it stems from."

He regrets missing the filming of the Christmas movie *The Knight Before Christmas* in nearby Bracebridge in May, but has already watched it this year, among other Christmas movies.

"It's not just another day for me," he said. "I'm up just as early as the kids. I'm just as excited, bouncing around on the couch, nothing's changed in that regard, I'm still going crazy for it. It's one of those things. All of a sudden it creeps up on you, here it is, and you've got to go crazy on it and then you've got 365 days to wait for the next go around."

Adam Thorn celebrates the first Christmas his son has topped the Christmas tree with the star. / Submitted

A home filled with Christmas cheer

SUE TIFFIN

County Life Staff

Deb Mansfield has long been known in Minden for her festive spirit - as the Christmas season approaches, she decorates her home with almost a dozen themed Christmas trees. /SUE TIFFIN Staff

As Deb Mansfield gives a tour of her stunning, warm Minden home, it's easy to lose track of just how many Christmas trees have been lovingly raised and decorated throughout the different rooms: living rooms, bedrooms, even bathrooms. She points out each tree – one decorated with Santas, a white tree that might gain a neighbour next year to share the number of ornaments it has, a flocked tree with red glass ornaments, and a Harry Potter tree topped with a wizard's hat, among them.

"I've only got 10 up, I don't count anything under four feet," Mansfield laughs, as she jokingly scoffs at the two-foot trees on display.

She's known as "the tree lady," by people who ask her kids about her, but her home is a vision of all things Christmas around this time of year, including the much-loved Santa figurines she has sculpted out of clay, stuffing their wire bodies, and attaching glass eyes and beards made of angora.

"That's what kind of started the whole Christmas ... overkill," she said.

She was in her 30s when she said she began having an interest in crafts.

"I took a course on how to make the Santas and I was enamoured, I just loved making the Santas," she said. And then a slip up only someone who loves the season would make: "It's hard to get the glass eyes, which snowed, I mean, slowed us up a bit."

Mansfield once owned a downtown shop in Minden, at two different times in two different locations, and said the fascination with trees began then.

"That was the first year we got trees, and ornaments, and I thought, oh, I can get trees at cost," she said. "It just grew through the store, because people would say, you know, have you ever done a tree like this?"

Over the years, Mansfield has decorated numerous trees – some for her family members with Coke bottle ornaments or nutcrackers, some for the town's Festival of Trees event, or simply for those who ask her to help. Decorations are often homemade ("We keep coming up with all kinds of ideas," she said. "Pinterest is my friend.") or come to her as thoughtful gifts or family treasures. One tree in her house is decorated with Jack Skellington ornaments for her daughter, another includes heirloom ornaments from her parents and old red trucks once loved by her late husband, Rick, who used to light the trees for her each year. Once, getting creative, she even used nylons – yes, pantyhose – to finish a tree when she had run out of gold tulle.

"I've done trees with a lot of different things," she said, including one designed with a cow theme, and one covered in condoms. "It's just fun. It's supposed to be fun. Your interests get piqued with something."

As for her tree collection – 10 are officially up right now, with three in storage – the most in one year she has put up when she owned the store as well, is 28.

"It's built slowly, not by any kind of, oh, I have to have 10 trees, not like that," she said.

Mansfield's children have tree collections of their own, having grown up with decorated trees throughout their youth.

"They started with two foot trees and we watered them and they grew," laughs Mansfield.

Even when they left for school, they had enough ornaments of their own to bring with them.

"By the time they were going away to university they had a tree to take, and it helped get them through that hard period where you're writing exams, and they have a little tree lit up and some ornaments on it," she said. "And they all said to me it was a help because they could still do those festive things and know that we were thinking of them and it was like a smile to them. It was nice to have that kind of connection."

Mansfield often hosts a craft sale and joins a studio tour, bringing creations from her basement workshop into the hands of those who want a piece of her collection – sometimes even asking to buy things from her walls. Her home was once featured on a tour in July, for which she put the trees up much earlier than usual and kept them around because she really does love what they offer to the atmosphere.

"Some people have asked, 'Why don't you leave it up each year?'" said Mansfield."But that wouldn't be nearly as much fun."

Instead, she often begins decorating on Nov. 1, after Halloween – when trick or treating neighbours have come to the door asking if the decorations are up yet – waiting to turn the lights on until after Remembrance Day.

"People will say something to me usually, 'I only have one tree up,'" she said. "Or people who aren't home at Christmas will say, 'I didn't put up a tree.' That's fine if that's how you feel, there's lots of other ways to be in the Christmas spirit. We just like trees."

She does have a favourite, and a most favourite, but the trees in her home all mean something to her for different reasons.

"It's all evolved naturally," she said. "It's fun for us, we've always been Christmas people."

Above, riders were invited to mingle with the animals during a break in the sleigh ride.

Dashing through the snow

Wilberforce resident Irvin Holland pilots his horses Saturday, Dec. 7 in Wilberforce. Holland has been retired since 2010 and has been providing sleigh/wagon rides for several years, which include stories about his horses, ponies and donkeys on his property. Rides are held weekly. Check the schedule for dates at Yours Outdoors (www.yoursoutdoors.ca/calendar). /DARREN LUM Staff

Sending warm wishes to you and your family during this

Christmas Season

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The Anglican Parish of Haliburton

A community following Jesus

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Christmas Lessons & Carols

St. George's, Haliburton, 9:30 am

St. Margaret's, Wilberforce, 11:30 am

Monday, December 23, 2019

Quiet Christmas Service

St. George's, Haliburton 7:00 pm

Tuesday, December 24, 2019

Christmas Eve

St. George's - Lessons & Carols 4:00 pm

St. George's - Carol Singing 9:45 pm

Service begins at 10:00 pm

St. Margaret's, Wilberforce, 7:00 pm

Christmas Morning Service

St. George's, Haliburton, 10:00 am

Regular Service Times

St. George's, Haliburton - Sunday at 8:00 & 9:30 am

St. Margaret's, Wilberforce - Sunday at 11:30 am

All are welcome

Starts November 23rd
Buy In And Win
Downtown Haliburton
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An all-inclusive trip for 2 to beautiful Cayo Coco, Cuba at the Melia Jardines Del Ray Resort*
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$1000 in CASH
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Draw will be live on air at 93.5 Moose FM at noon Monday, December 23, 2019.
Shop at any participating Downtown Haliburton member businesses and enter a ballot which you will receive with your purchase. Enter as often as you like until Sunday, December 22, 2019.

*Subject to availability, peak travel time, and black outs. Must be 19 years of age or older to win. Winner is subject to contest rules. Contest rules available from Haliburton BIA.

Christmas tree poems

by Gr.4 and 5 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Cookies
Holiday
Reindeer
Icicles
St. Nick
Treats
Mistletoe
Amazing
Sleigh

By Kate Walker, Grade 4

Candy
Ho ho ho
Reindeer
Ice skates
Sleep
Tree
Mass
Angel
Songs

By Brody Hartwig, Grade 4

Candy cane
Holiday
Rudolph
Icicles
Santa
Tree
Mistletoe
Angel
Snowflakes

By Sarah Teljeur, Grade 4

Cookies
Hot chocolate
Rudolph
Ice skates
Santa
Tradition
Mistletoe
Antlers
St. Nick

By Judea Hall, Grade 5

Claus
Holly
Rooftop
Icicles
Sleep
Tree
Mass
Angel
Songs

By Mason Latanville, Grade 4

Carols, Christmas
Ho ho ho, hot chocolate
Reindeer, Rudolph
Icicles, imagination
Santa, St. Nick
Traditions, tree
Mistletoe, manger
Angel, amazing
Snowman, snowflakes

By Olivia Fitzell, Grade 4

Christmas, carols
Ho ho ho, holly
Reindeer, Rudolph
Icicles, ice skates
Santa, snow
Turkey, tree
Mrs. Claus, manger
Angel, antlers
Snowman, songs

By Bobby Brown, Grade 4

Season's Greetings
You, our loyal customers,
are the secret to our success.
Thank you for doing business
with us again this year.
We wish you a safe and
Happy Holiday Season
and a prosperous 2020.
G. Rowden Construction

The Municipality of Dysart et al
Wishes you a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

NOTICE:
Christmas Hours & Closures

Dysart et al Municipal Office
will be CLOSED from noon on
Tuesday, December 24th, 2019
To
Wednesday, January 1st, 2020
The office will re-open on Thursday, January 2 @ 8:30 a.m.

Christmas Break Shinny and Public Skating Hours
at the A.J. LaRue Arena
Shinny: $5 per person, Full equipment is required
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. - December 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31 & January 2, 3, 5
Free Public Skating:
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. – December 22, 24, 26, 29, 31 & January 1, 2 & 5
12:00 – 1:30 p.m. – December 27 & January 3
3:00 – 4:30 p.m. – December 23 & 30

New Year's Eve Skating Party 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Free for all to attend. There will be music, hot dogs, popcorn and beverages! All are welcome.

For further information please contact the A.J. LaRue Arena at 705-457-1740 ext. 644 or visit www.dysartetal.ca/events.

All Landfills will be CLOSED on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Letters to Santa

by Gr.3 and 4 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Dear Santa,

I think I have been a good boy. I could be better but I forget about Christmas.

I help outside. I shovel the driveway so people don't get stuck in the snow.

I helped build my cottage by holding wood up so my dad could screw the wood on the sides of the cottage.

I help inside. I try to clear my living room so it looks nice so people aren't looking at a dirty living room.

I help in my classroom. I like to clear my desk at school because I am a neat person. I also help people do work when I am done my work so they can get good grades.

I think I should get a hover board because I think I have been a good boy.

P.S. I have been a little bad.

Love Jacob Sutton

Dear Santa,

I have been a good kid this year. I helped a friend with a bully that was swearing, took charge of shovelling my family's driveways and helped with my baby brother.

Many of my friends have problems with a bully shoving them around, so I help them by standing up to that bully by telling them to stop bullying people. I also ask them to stop swearing and use nice words. I have done this for a lot of friends.

My family does not have someone clear our driveway and my family does not like the cold, so I took the liberty of taking our snow shovel and clearing my family's driveways. I had a lot of hot chocolates and the driveways got done.

My mom and dad are very busy so sometimes me and my brother have to take care of the baby. When my brother hears that somebody needs to take the baby he's instantly busy, so I take the baby and play trucks and cars with him.

Also, in the truck I take the middle so that means I have to feed him. I don't care because I am helping out.

That is why I have been nice and helpful with friends, family and siblings.

From Landyn Simms

Dear Santa,

I think I have been a good boy this year. I help my friends Coltyn and Kristyn on the farm because it's busy there. I also help my friends do work because it can be hard sometimes. I also help my neighbours do firewood.

I help Kristyn and Coltyn because there's a lot to do on farms. I like doing work. It can be fun because everyone has different ways of doing it. Sometimes, I get dropped off and Coltyn is sleeping so I help Kristyn get work done.

I like to help my classmates do work because you get treated well by them.

It is also fun because it means you're a leader and leaders rule the world. It is fun because you can make more friends and more friends are better than less.

I love firewood because sometimes frogs hide underneath the wood. It is also fun because you get paid for working. It might take a long time but, trust me, it is worth it. If you were old and no one came to do your wood that wouldn't be good because you'd have nothing to put in your fireplace.

That is why I think I have been a good boy.

Love Jadyn Hamilton

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HALIBURTON & DISTRICT LIONS CLUB

2020 SUPER CASH CALENDAR RAFFLE

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY NEEDS

3 draws on the 2nd Monday (January-October) at the Lions meeting at the Haliburton United Church at 6:30 pm (public is welcome to attend the draw)

$8,000 total prize money

Tickets at

- *Cranberry Cottage*
- *The Source-Halco Electronic*
- *Minden/Haliburton Hearing Service in Haliburton*
- *The Haliburton Supplements and Bulk Foods*
- *Online at www.haliburtonlions.com*
- *By phone at (texting only) 705-455-2772*
- *Email at gatesstelter@gmail.com*
- *Lion member*

FIRST DRAW

JANUARY 13, 2020

LAST DRAW

OCTOBER 12, 2020

Only 400 tickets printed

1st ticket drawn $100.00 CASH

2nd ticket drawn $200.00 CASH

3rd ticket drawn $500.00 CASH

All tickets are returned to the drum for future draws

Winners are posted monthly on our website: www.haliburtonlions.com

TICKET COST: $50.00 LICENSE 819746

Tickets printed and donated by Parker Pad & Printing Ltd.

Legion Events

Branch 636 Minden

Monday – Thursday Lunch 12 to 2 p.m.
Tuesday Special liver day, regular menu also.
Friday 12 to 2 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m., Fish, Chicken Wings, Fries and Onion Rings.
Daily events: Monday 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Haliburton Highlands Rug Hookers. (every two weeks)
Tuesday 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Senior art group. 1 to 4 p.m., Bid Euchre,
Wednesday 12 - Meat Draws, 4 butcher quality meats for $1 a ticket. 1 to 4 p.m., Ladies Darts, 5 to 7 p.m. Calorie Counters 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Thursday 7 p.m. Darts. 7 p.m. Euchre
Friday Every second week, Karaoke with Fred and Linda, 7:30 to 11:30 p.m.
Saturday Special Lunch every week with meat Draw at 1 p.m.
Sunday Sports Day 12 to 4:30 p.m.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Friday C. C. lunch. To book call Denice Butler 705-448-8865.
Everyone 55+ welcome.
Wing night 6 to 9 p.m.
Jam session 7:30 p.m.
Saturday Meat draw 2 p.m. Early bird 3 p.m. Sharp! If you come out offer to help sell tickets please!
Monday Bid Euchre 7 p.m. Beginners welcome.
Wednesday Closed
Upcoming Events
Early bird membership renewal $45
Dec 31 - New years dance. Tickets on sale now $20. Featuring D.J. Isla. Buffet, spot dances, party favours.

Having a event ? Book our hall and have L.A. cater for you. They do a great job! Want to get involved? Please call or drop by the legion 705-448-2221 now if you can help.

Branch 129 Haliburton

Dave Allen, PRO 705-457-2571
Mondays: Bridge every Monday at 1 p.m.
Tuesday Night Dart League starting at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start Bingo Doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo starts at 7 p.m. - $1,000 Jackpot - last Wednesday of the month.
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, starting at 7 p.m. All members urged to attend. Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Cribbage 1 p.m. start Meat Draw Five Draws, Five Prizes each draw, First draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw - 6:30 p.m. Tickets are $2 per draw. Chester Howse, MC Friday fun darts - 4:30 p.m. onwards
Saturdays: 50/50 Draw 4 p.m. draw, Tickets are $1 each from noon onwards
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for more information call the Legion today at 705-457-2571, email rcl129@bellnet.ca or visit haliburtonlegion.com Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129. Everyone is welcome!

FIND OUT MORE AT **FINDYOURFORD.CA.**

Vehicle(s) may be shown with optional equipment. Dealer may sell or lease for less. Limited time offers. Offers only valid at participating dealers. Retail offers may be cancelled or changed at any time without notice. See your Ford Dealer for complete details or call the Ford Customer Relationship Centre at 1-800-565-3673. For factory orders, a customer may either take advantage of eligible raincheckable Ford retail customer promotional incentives/offers available at the time of vehicle factory order or time of vehicle delivery, but not both or combinations thereof. Retail offers not combinable with any CPA/GPC or Daily Rental incentives, the Commercial Upfit Program or the Commercial Fleet Incentive Program (CFIP). *From December 3, 2019 to January 31, 2020, receive $8,500 / $9,500 / $10,500 in "Manufacturer Rebates" (Delivery Allowance) with the purchase or lease of a new 2019: F-150 Reg. Cab 4x2 XL (Value Leader), F-150 SuperCab (gas) XL / F-150 SuperCrew (gas) Platinum/Limited and F-150 SuperCab & SuperCrew (diesel) Platinum/Limited / F-150 Reg. Cab (excluding 4x2 XL), F-150 SuperCab (excluding XL, Platinum and Limited) and SuperCrew (excluding (diesel) XL, Platinum and Limited) – all stripped chassis, F-150 Raptor, F-650/F-750 excluded. Delivery allowances are not combinable with any fleet consumer incentives. †F-Series is the best-selling line of pickup trucks in Canada for 53 years in a row, based on Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association statistical sales report up to year-end 2018 and year-to-date as at February 28, 2019. ©2019 Sirius Canada Inc. "SiriusXM", theSiriusXM logo, channel names and logos are trademarks of SiriusXM Radio Inc. and are used under licence. ©2019 Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited. All rights reserved.

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The very first thing

ANNE-MARIE BORTHWICK
Special to County Life

A gift purchased six decades ago is a reminder of a child's first (non-candy) purchase, time spent at the cottage and the enduring love of family. /Photo by Anne-Marie Borthwick

This humble pottery llama represents many firsts in my life. It was in the early '60s, shortly after my parents had bought the property and built our family cottage. We had just arrived in Haliburton and were stocking up before we began the long and bumpy ride into Drag Lake. As we were walking through town my mother spotted the llama in the window of Varty's Jewellers and exclaimed, "Oh, look at that darling llama!" We continued along to the IGA or Red & White to do the shopping.

Though we'd shopped together many times, I'd never heard my mother sound so taken by the beauty of anything for sale. The first thing that struck me was the longing tone humming below the words. My first plot to outfox my parents began to percolate. Then, manufacturing some excuse to detach from my parents and baby sister, I doubled back to Varty's. Having just entrusted National Trust with my entire fortune I had no cash, but I did have a book of cheques and had been promised by NT they were just like having real money, but even if I lost them I'd still have the money. On that basis, I relinquished all my birthday and Christmas loot and saved allowances, totalling nearly $20 to their safekeeping.

On entering Varty's the clerk wished me good morning and asked if she could help me with anything. "Yes," I responded, "I'd like to see that llama in the window." She walked right over and took it out and set it on the counter. That was the first time that I had been treated like a serious customer. "It really is lovely, isn't it," she commented. "Umm, how much does it cost?" I asked, and she told me it was $11, if memory serves. I had not expected it would cost more than I had in my small purse, which was probably $2 in change. Summoning all the dignity and stature a seven-year-old has on tap, I inquired, "Will you take a cheque?" "Of course, dear," she replied without hesitation. This was the first time that I had ever bought something costing more than 50 cents and without containing sugar. And, plus, in addition, I was treated like a serious customer! I was in awe of my own maturity. "I'll just wrap this up while you write the cheque. Is this a gift?" "Yes, for my mom," I responded, feeling more sophisticated by the second. She had wrapped it beautifully in a box with tissue paper and everything. I left on a cloud, clutching the precious llama close to my chest, and went to the car to hide the package before catching up with my family. We then completed our errands and drove into the cottage, with my sister and I on opposite sides of the back seat, windows open, grabbing at the branches that poked through, slapping us.

On arrival and after completing all the "first time up," steps, turning on the electricity, priming the pump, removing the evidence of uninvited winter guests, putting away the purchases, I sneaked out to the car to retrieve the gift. "Here," I said to Mom. She was surprised and puzzled. "What's this?" "You have to open it to find out," I said, no doubt smugly. It was the first time I ever saw my mom incoherent and overwhelmed. "How did you – when did – where did you get – who told..." It was a thrilling moment for me on so many levels, I tear up even now, almost six decades later.

Now my mom is in a nursing home, but the llama lives in my home now, in the same spot as our old cottage used to be and where I'm so grateful to be able to live. With all the changes that happen in the course of a life it is a pure joy to look out on a view almost unchanged in all that time.

The power of the purse

JENN WATT
County Life Editor

Charleen Gordon, left, Christine McRae and Maureen Luckasavitch stand with the pile of purses and bags donated through the purse drive. Many of them were donated by Haliburton area residents. /Photo submitted by Christine McRae

When Val Balaski heard about an initiative to send purses to women in First Nations communities, she knew just how much the gesture would mean.

Years ago, when she lived in Nova Scotia, Balaski spent the week of Christmas in a women's shelter with her kids. When she arrived, she was given a bag of items including a toothbrush and toothpaste, hairbrush, shampoo and soap.

"I remember it made me cry to think somebody who didn't know me or didn't know these other people in there, but had the compassion to put together these bags and then when the women come in, they're given these bags so that they have some toiletries," she said.

The experience taught her how important small acts of kindness can be – and how the gift of a purse with useful items can brighten someone's day, or even change someone's perspective.

The purse drive, which is organized each year by Charleen Gordon and Marleen Murphy, sisters from the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, has been taken up locally by Christine McRae in the Bancroft area and her mother Maureen Luckasavitch. McRae reached out to her network of friends throughout the region including Haliburton, Peterborough, Maynooth and even Aurora.

Last year, McRae gathered 68 purses. This year, it was 131. Those purses are added to the ones brought in at Tyendinaga and it's estimated more than 400 will be donated to women in communities that have experienced hardship in recent years, including some in the midst of suicide epidemics.

Karen Warner of Harcourt also saw McRae's callout for purses and decided to participate.

"I know Christine … I look to really support initiatives for women and in particular Indigenous women. Always interested in what she's got going on. She does so much in the community," she said.

Perhaps because Warner doesn't usually carry a purse herself, she had a couple in the house that hadn't been used much and decided to donate them.

The purse drive asks people to donate new or gently used purses and to either fill them with useful items such as toiletries, tea, flashlights, stationery supplies, or donate money to have them filled by a volunteer. The convenience of the process was part of what made the initiative successful, Warner said.

"I wasn't able to run around and collect purses or stuff purses [due to personal time constraints], but I was able to drop off my own purse and then make a donation where others would stuff the purse and make it personal," she said.

Last year, purses collected were sent to northern Ontario and Saskatchewan, but this year McRae said there is more of a focus on First Nations communities in southeastern Ontario, while also sending some on to Saskatchewan again.

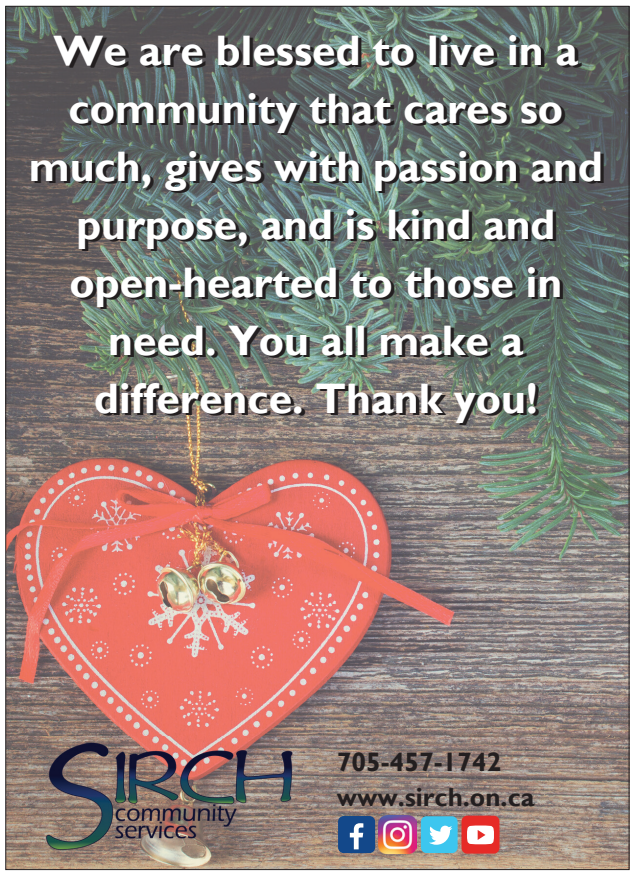
"Basically, reserves that you know need a little extra support and need people to know they care about them, even though we've never met them," she said.

For her part, Balaski coordinated purses from her contacts in the Haliburton area, storing them in her bedroom, where they took up plenty of floor space. She didn't count them, but thinks there were likely 20 to 25. Then she drove them to Maynooth, where she met McRae for the handoff.

"I was just so proud of the women [who donated]. That's why I say women helping women. They banded together and they came forward. The donation was $50 [worth of items] or something like that and some of these women brought the purses and I know there was more than $50 worth of products in those purses. ... It was humbling, it just made my heart swell."

McRae said she's thankful for those who supported the purse drive again this year.

"I think the most important thing is thanking everyone who took the time to put a purse together, to donate or even to spread the word. I know a few people worked hard to reach out to their friends and collect purses and sort through them. Anyone who took part in any way," she said.


We are blessed to live in a community that cares so much, gives with passion and purpose, and is kind and open-hearted to those in need. You all make a difference. Thank you!
SIRCH community services
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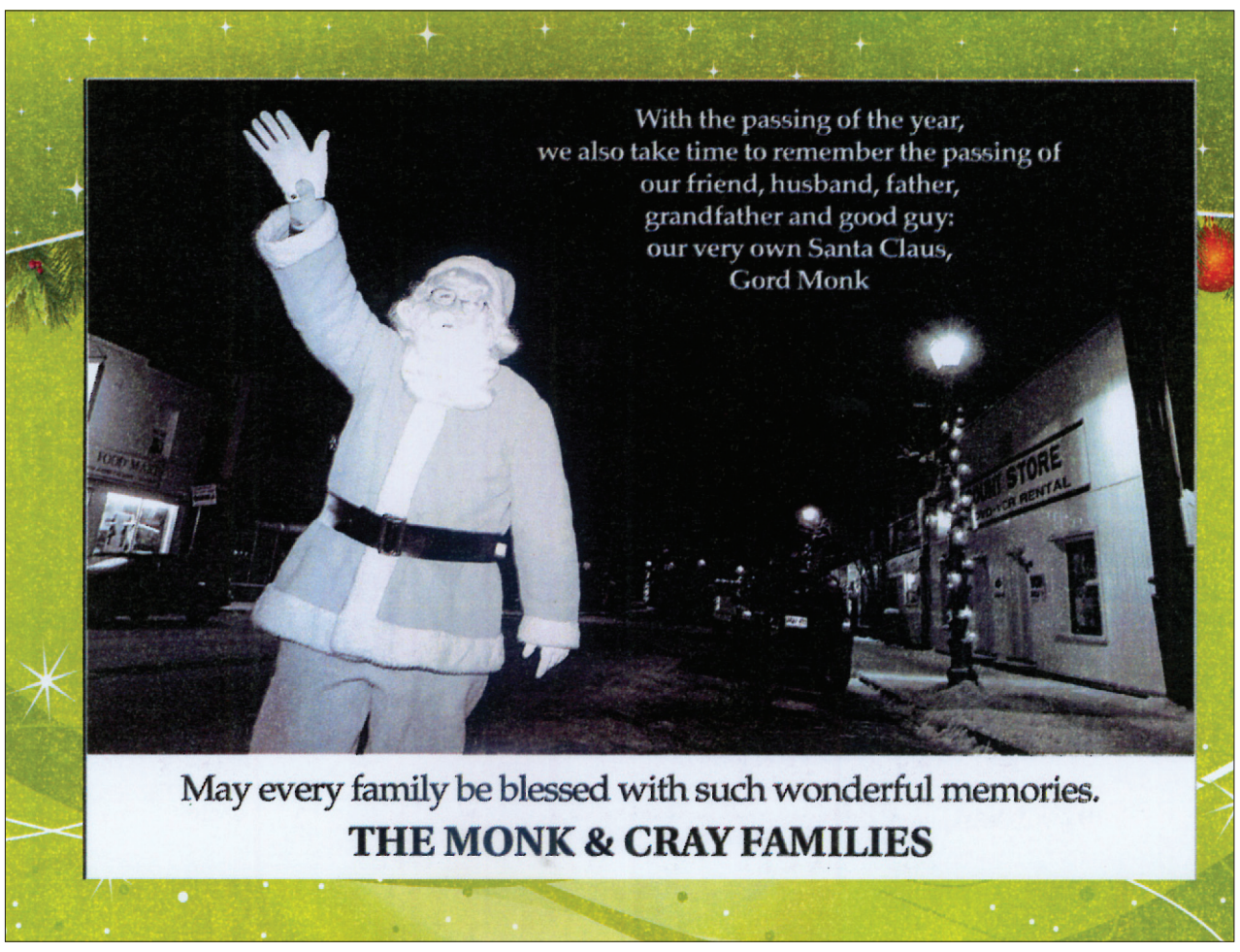
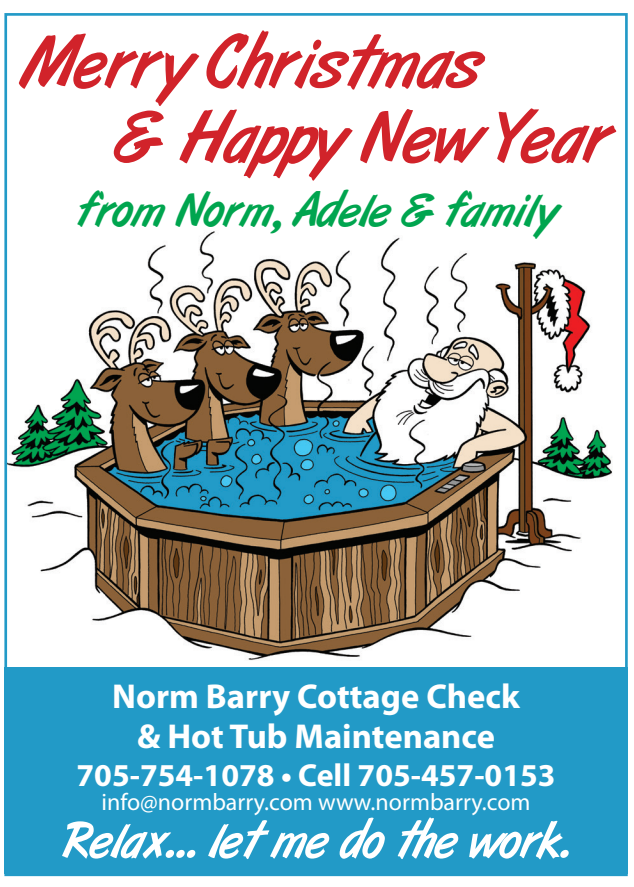

With the passing of the year,
we also take time to remember the passing of
our friend, husband, father,
grandfather and good guy:
our very own Santa Claus,
Gord Monk
May every family be blessed with such wonderful memories.
THE MONK & CRAY FAMILIES



The memory-scents of the holidays

BELINDA GALLAGHER
Garden Musings

AS I PUT PEN to paper, or rather fingers to keys, I drank in the fresh, pitchy aroma of the newly decorated balsam fir standing in the far corner of the room. There is something about the scent that takes me back to my childhood in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Although the balsam fir does not grow in Nevada, white fir, red fir and Douglas fir are abundant and must have similar fragrant saps.

In any case, this memory jolt started me musing about fragrance and more specifically the scintillating scents that surround us in the holiday season and the memories those scents elicit.

Most of us have experienced the connection between a sensory stimulus like smell and a memory – a reaction called the "Proust Effect." For example, a certain aftershave might evoke a scene with your father or an old fashioned rose could transport you to your grandmother's garden. Usually the recollection is vivid and immediate and in fact, these flashbacks are called episodic or autobiographical – "what-when-where memory," according to researcher Afif Aqrabawi.

The Christmas season is ripe with triggering scents, and not coincidentally, many are plant-based like the woodsy aroma of the balsam fir.

Other fragrant evergreens include cedar, pine, hemlock and yew – all popular in holiday decorating. The essential oils from these plants are pervasive in household cleaners, disinfectants, insect repellants, deodor-

see page 25

Enjoy the Holidays with family and friends!

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Haliburton Highlands MUSEUM
Open Year Round!

Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas!

"Here we are as in olden days,
Happy golden days of yore.
Faithful friends who are dear
To us gather near to us once more."

Wishing you and yours a holiday season full of old-fashioned pleasures! We look forward to welcoming you again in 2020!

66 Museum Road, on the outskirts of Haliburton Village
For more information, please call 705-457-2760
or visit www.haliburtonhighlandsmuseum.com

Pine, clove, nutmeg and apple conjure memories of holidays past

from page 24

izers and perfumes. So pervasive that I sometimes think clean toilet rather than Happy Holidays when the evergreen boughs and wreaths appear on store shelves.

A while ago, my friend Donna and I went to the Santa's Workshop Christmas Craft Sale in Wilberforce and the large room smelled wonderful. Several vendors were selling soaps and candles infused with plant oils. Donna commented that the evergreen scent at one booth took her right back to her childhood when she and her family made the outing to cut down a tree for Christmas. "That fresh pine scent reminds me of family."

Much better than clean bathrooms, right?

My mother loved the spicy/piney tang of bayberry (wax myrtle) and would always purchase scented candles for the season. I remember her saying that the odour reminded her of "the ladies" gathering for candle making when she was a small child. "My sister and I would help pick the ripe berries in the fall," she said. "It was during the Depression when we had nothing so everything was gathered or homemade. Just before Thanksgiving the 'ladies' would gather at Aunt Mamie's house," Mom reminisced. "I would run through the adjacent woods to the back porch and peek in the screen door. The kitchen was damp and warm from melting down the hard, blue, waxy berries with beeswax in an old tin can sitting in a water bath. I remember that scene like it was yesterday."

Herbs and spices can similarly remind you of long past events. Clove, cranberry and apple are, like pine, common aromas in holiday candles and soaps. Additionally, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, rosemary, and sage – staples in seasonal foods – can prompt intense recollections.

Another friend, Jodi, says her childhood memories are all linked to holiday sweets. She says that is why she bakes all the time. For her, the ginger in gingerbread, peppermint in candy or apple in a pie is all about love. Hands and hair covered in flour with Grandma in a gingham apron teaching her to roll dough.

The distinctive bouquet of allspice crosses many cultures. Not only used in sweets, it can also be found in savory dishes such as Swedish meatballs, Jamaican jerk blends, Mexican mole, French cassoulet and Middle Eastern spice mixes. I am sure it has the same, wonderful memory-effect for those celebrating different holidays!

I mustn't neglect two scents that are often mentioned in top 10 lists – frankincense and myrrh. They are two of the three gifts of the Magi mentioned in the biblical Gospel of Matthew. Both are gum resins taken from trees in the Burseraceae family, trees that grow in Africa, India and the Middle East. They are extremely fragrant – myrrh exuding a smoky/sweetness and frankincense a warm/spicy aroma.

Most often encountered as incense in church masses and other religious ceremonies, I was surprised to find both sold on Amazon as essential oils. Just as the other fragrance producers above, the increased interest in aromatherapy is creating a new market for plant-based oils. So much so that the Commiphora myrrha tree, from which myrrh is extracted is now a species of special concern.

I like that our memories are connected to plants through scent. It is yet another reason to celebrate the amazing natural world around us.

Note: Afif Aqrabawi, is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto investigating episodic memory and early detection of Alzheimer's.

The Proust Effect – As a child, philosopher Marcel Proust's aunt gave him madeleines (small cookies) dipped in tea. Later on as an adult, eating a madeleine would conjure up pages and pages of childhood recollections. Hence the cookies became the symbol of the past that arises unintentionally.

Free Holiday Public Skating
A.J. LaRue Arena, Haliburton
Friday, December 27, 12:00 - 1:30
Thursday, January 2, 11:00 - 12:30
Friday, January 3, 12:00 - 1:30
Happy Holidays and New Year!
We are so grateful to have had such a bright year, working in the best community ever! Thank you.
We hope you find time to enjoy a 'Spin on the Ice' on us.
Karen & Brandon Nimigon

The gifts in the woods

STEVE GALEA
Walking Softly

Christmas brings with it many gifts. First and foremost is the joy we derive from family and friends – whether in the phone calls or the face-to-face smiles and laughter.

Then, there are those presents wrapped in colour and adorned in ribbons under the tree. Some are made to be held in your hands or worn with pride. Others are meant to be used as tools, played with as toys or enjoyed by the fireplace as you listen or read. They bring smiles, not only for what they are, but also for the thought put into each.

Equally wonderful are the less tangible gifts. These are the ones that touch the heart and soul. They remind us of the spirit of the season and of God's love. They might even bring with them a hope that one day we might actually achieve peace on earth and goodwill towards men.

As I get older, I find these less tangible gifts more meaningful.

One of my favourites during the holiday season are the gifts I receive from a walk in the winter woods.

It is not difficult to find happiness when a blank canvas of snow lies ahead and a fresh set of snowshoe tracks is behind you. Each print a letter that forms words that tell the tale of a forest that is yours alone, if only for a while.

There is a gift under every tree, if you look for it.

Nature might provide the unforgettable sight of a deer rising from its bed with bough snow descending and settling on its perfect coat. You might derive joy from the tracks of a red squirrel, as they stitch and connect their trees. Or you might find wonder in the etching of an owl's wings in the snow as it mantles across flecks of blood and tufts of fur. For this is a story of a life ended and a life sustained.

In the woods, there are hymns hidden in the moaning of the wind. There is a choir in the birdsong. There is a prayer in the silence.

Each mist of breath rising from your lungs counts down the seconds of your life and reminds you that, at this moment at least, you are living it well. In the woods, in the winter, there is no need to hurry and there is every reason to take it all in.

The beauty and serenity it contains, the solitude and room for thought it gives, these are gifts for us all, to be taken freely and without limit. They renew the spirit. They raise the soul. They cause you to smile or to stare in reverence at all those sights that will never be the same again.

On days like these, I am reminded that the first time over a fresh blanket of snow is the best time. And that the crossing of my tracks with those of the animals' is a sign of our interconnectedness. The trees, whether standing strong and vertical, pocked with nest holes, or broken at the base, form the most glorious cathedral of worship in a place where we have every reason to be thankful – and where, as I see it, God remains closest.

That is the special blessing given in places such as ours. Open that gift with the appreciation it deserves. Merry Christmas to all.

Climate Change Hits Close to Home!

FACT: Research shows that climate change affects our health

- We see climate change hitting home here in more flooding, heat waves, and severe storms
- Climate change creates conditions that can lead to illness and injury. Seniors, young children, people living on low income and people with chronic illness are most at risk
- We must adapt to climate change to protect our health!

#OurPlanetOurHealth #MakeItBetter

www.hkpr.on.ca Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit 1-866-888-4577

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Letters to Santa

by Gr.3 and 4 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Dear Santa,

I've been pretty good this year.
I've been helping my mom around the house this year. I have been shovelling my deck off so it is not slippery. I do the dishes so we have clean dishes. I help clean my bedroom when it is messy. I help my mom cook breakfast and supper.
I help my dad work sometimes in the winter. I help him fix our hockey rink. I help my dad landscape around the house.
I help my sister around the house. I helped her take the dogs for a walk. I helped her put music on for her dances.
That is why I should get presents this year.

Love Jack Tomlinson

Dear Santa,

I wish for an Xbox because I've been nice all year around.
I help my dad. I clean the arena when the game is over.
I help my mom. I clean the windows sometimes. And I helped my mom sort my toys at the house. I play with my little sister Ava.
All of those things are nice.

Love Gabriel Loney

Dear Santa,

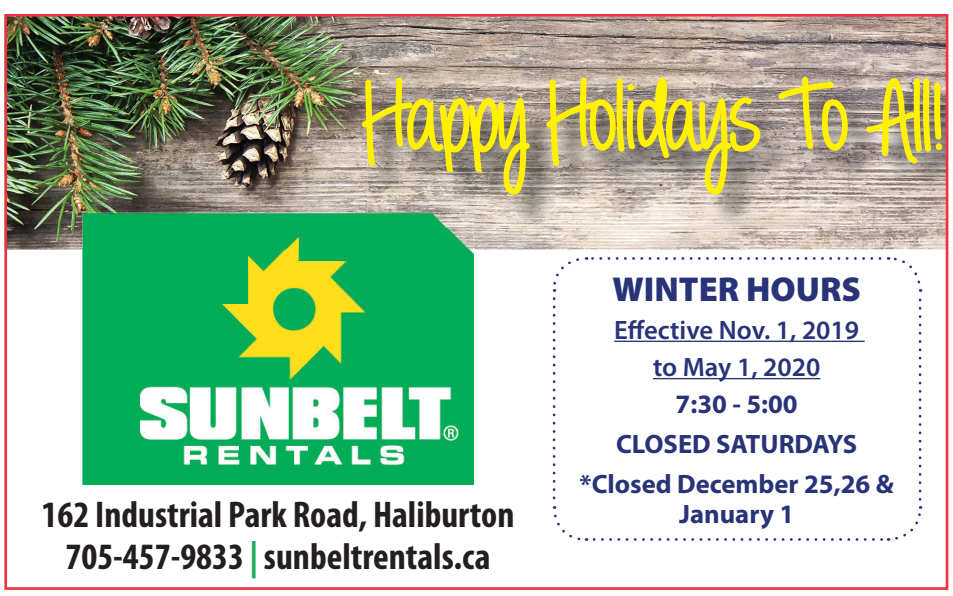
I have been nice this year.
Sometimes I help my mom at work on the weekends. I put food in the box and I open the garlic.
I help at home. Sometimes, I wash the table. I take the plates out of the dishwasher.
These are the reasons from home and the restaurant that I am nice.

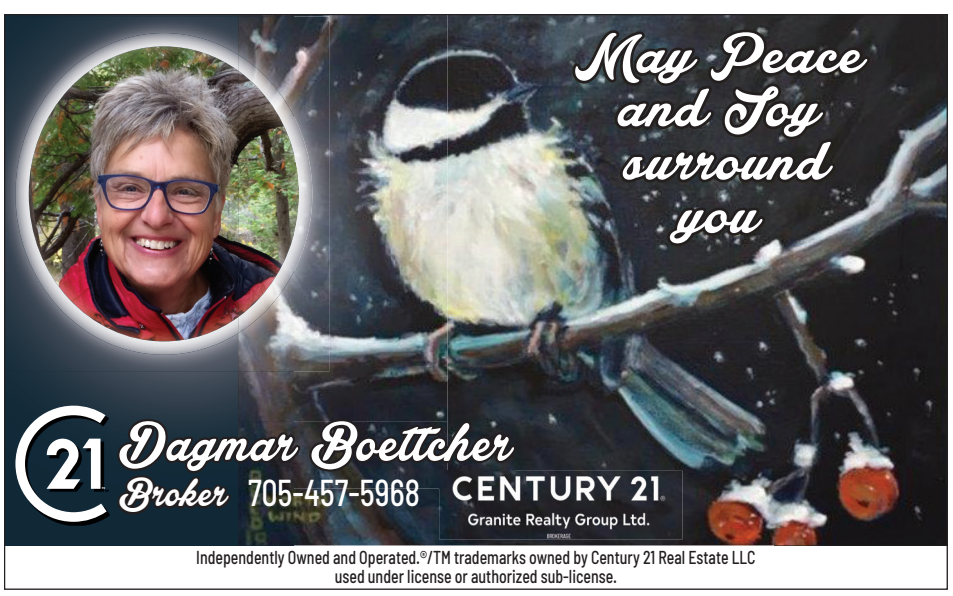
From Justin Lee

Dear Santa,

I have been very nice.
I help my aunt all of the time. I give her company. I also ask if she is okay when it sounds like she's hurt. On Christmas, I will help my aunt open presents.
I also am very nice to my sister Ava because when she hurts me, I just call for mom. When I hurt my sister I will tell on myself. When she's sad, I'll be funny to cheer her up.
At school, I helped a classmate on a computer doing social studies. I got a reward for it but I was wondering if that would count because I already got a reward for it.
Anyhow, I really want to be on the nice list.

Love Jayla Marchand




May Peace and Joy surround you
21
Dagmar Boettcher
Broker 705-457-5968
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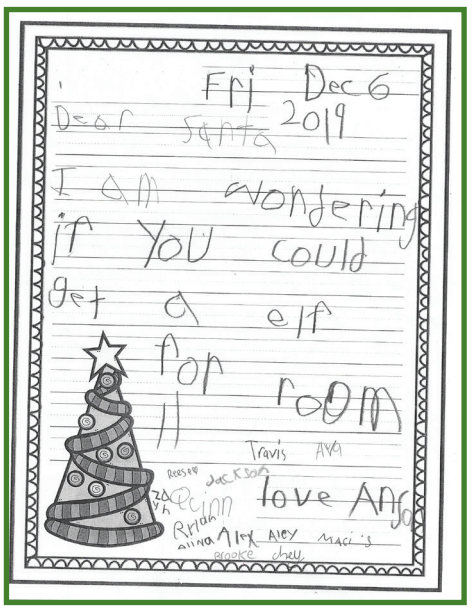
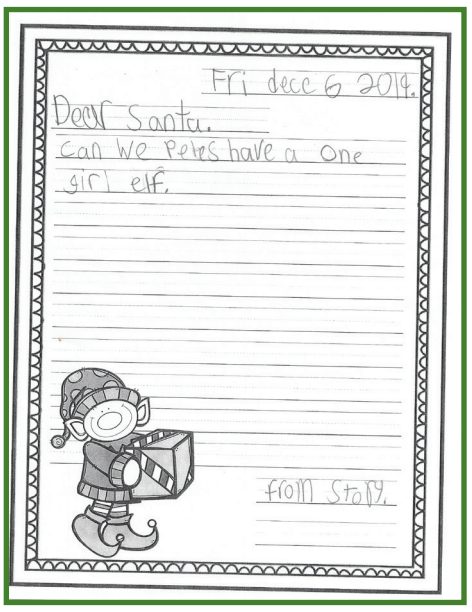
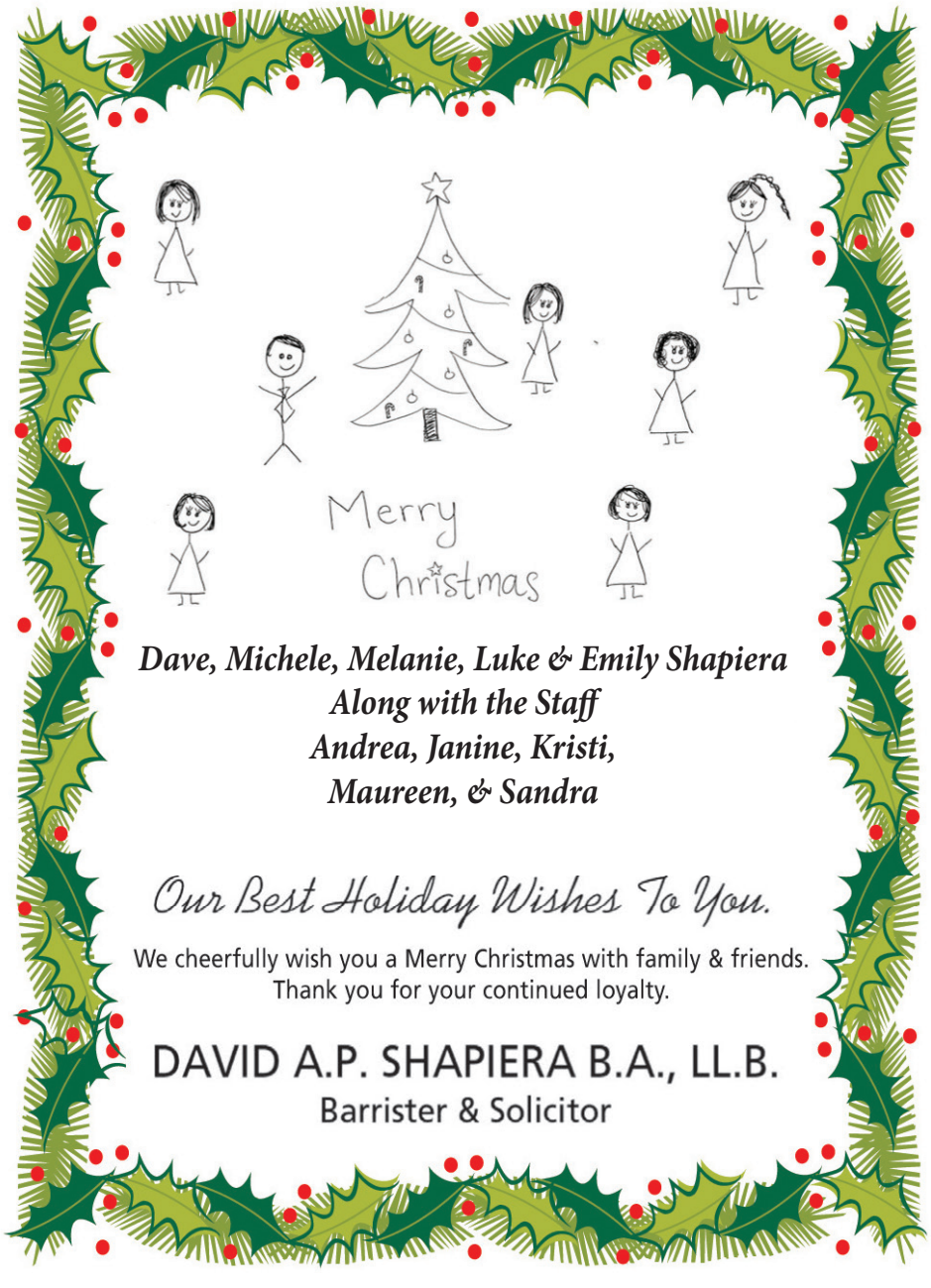
Holiday artwork and letters





HANOUKKA!
la fête dure 8 chandelles parce que ça prend juste assez de huile pour une journée. Pendant 8 jours, on allume une chandelle par soir et on a un petit cadeau chaque soir. Le dernier soir, on allume toutes les chandelles et on a un grand cadeau.
le histoire de HANOUKKA
HANOUKKA veut dire: Dedication
by: Brooklyn Bjelis

DEC 06 2019
Dear Santa
can you Please give room 11 e Elf's can you Please send a girl Elf and a boy Elf for are class To find everyday, on tell cristmas.
from
Quinnlyn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Dave, Michele, Melanie, Luke & Emily Shapiera
Along with the Staff
Andrea, Janine, Kristi,
Maureen, & Sandra
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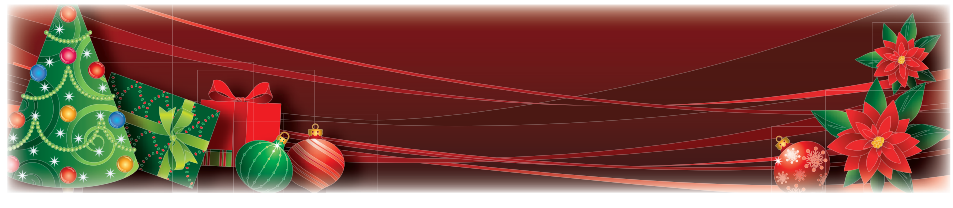

by students at Stuart Baker Elementary School

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Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year!

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Gerald & Krysta, Ron, Bill,
Jenn, Nathan, Kevin, Greg,
Alex, Dan, Brandon & Ben

Fire from the sky

A bombed toy shop offers an opportunity for a boy in wartime London

MICHAEL BARNES

A Christmas Story

Nine-year-old Ben sat in his room close to midnight on Dec. 23, 1943. He was supposed to be asleep but instead gazed at the night sky. Maybe there would be an air raid. London, England had suffered many air raids in the war. Ben was interested watching the aircraft caught in the searchlights and the fighters climbing in the night sky to fight them.

He scanned the night sky but tonight there were no searchlights, no big bangs and no planes overhead. After a while he gave up and went back to bed.

Before he fell asleep he thought for a moment of Christmas. He had not had a new present in the four years since the war started. There were no toys left for sale in wartime London.

Any gifts he had been given were from neighbours who found things stored in their spare rooms or attics. Once he was given a globe but the map shown on it was scratched and it had place names hard to see.

He was fed up with gifts of jigsaw puzzles and photo albums. His parents tried but he knew that there were few things in the shops to buy.

Ben was asleep when the German bomber flew overhead. The Heinkel pilot was worried and felt dangerously alone. Hauptman Donner's plane had fallen behind the other machines attacking London. He now could see little ahead and the widening curve of the River Thames was his only marker.

The target had been the London docks but by now the anti-aircraft guns would be alert and ready to fire at his lone aircraft.

He decided to head for home before the Heinkel became the target of a British night fighter, the dreaded Spitfire.

He spoke on the radio to the bomb aimer. "Drop the 'eggs' and let's get out of here." There was a sharp noise as the bomb doors were opened.

The load that night was not bombs that would badly damage any buildings on the ground. Instead the bomb bay held a clutch of long tubes called incendiaries.

Incendiaries were filled with chemicals which would set fire to buildings when they landed. They were not aimed like bombs but just fell out of the night sky in a shower of danger.

Ben was fast asleep when the deadly payload came down from the sky. Since the incendiaries were not aimed, they scattered as the wind carried them down through the night sky. Some splashed into the River Thames and were made harmless by the water. Some fell on open fields and did not cause a fire. There were some duds that did not work.

But in a few places they hit buildings and kept firemen busy putting out fires.

The bomber headed back out to sea and its home airfield. The pilot never found out how the load he had dropped hurt London.

One of the "sticks" did come hurtling down and hit the skylight of a shop. The danger from the sky crashed though the glass and started a fire that spread through the building.

Firemen were busy that night and when they got to the building it was too late to save the place. The walls were brick and stone and did not burn. But the interior of the shop was gutted.

The fire hoses soon put out the flames. The wrecked store timbers would smolder for a while after they left. The damage done was echoed in several other buildings that night.

One fireman looked up at the shop as his truck raced off to another blaze. The letters above the door read The Toy Box.

When Ben awoke on Christmas eve the view from his window showed a bright blue sky. He was rested because there had been no air raids in his area. Some nights the family heard the sirens and had to go out to the shelter in the back yard to be safe from any danger from the sky. But last night had been quiet.

Although it was only seven o'clock his parents had already gone off to work. Ben's mother, like many others had to work in a factory for the war effort and his dad drove one of the big red buses.

He made his own breakfast and thought about tomorrow, Christmas Day. His class had made paper chains and Ben had brought a bag full home. He went round the living room hanging the brightly coloured chains in several places.

Ben's school had a cupboard full of boxes of raffia. The teacher had shown them how to weave the long bright fibres. Ben had made a purse for his mother and a wallet for his dad.

Just then there was a loud knocking on the front door. His friend Billy Harris stood on the step. He was excited.

"Ben, " he said, "Grab your coat and let's go."

"Go where?" Ben asked.

"My dad told me The Toy Box was bombed last night. Maybe there will be something there for us."

Ben took his coat and ran down the road with his friend. He knew that the shop had been closed as long as he could remember. There just were no toys for sale

see page 31

Wishing our Loyal Customers,
Friends and Family
a Magical Holiday Season.
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from
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Treasure found from amidst the rubble

from page 30

in war time.

The two boys reached the Upper Road and raced on toward the row of shops in the center of town. In early morning there were not many people about so the sidewalk was wide open to them.

As he ran, Ben thought of the chance that there might be toys left in the burned out building. Even if it came from a bombed building, anything found there would be new to him.

The two boys had to stop and wait until traffic lights changed to green. Then they ran on and Ben could see that Billy with his longer legs was pulling away from him.

The front of The Toy Box was on the main street but the two boys turned and ran down the narrow road that was behind the shops. This was the easiest way to get to the shop. From this back yard they could not be seen from the main street.

A pile of blackened wood and burnt furniture greeted them. Smoke still steamed off the damaged building. The windows were gone and they could see inside the place.

Nothing inside was still standing. There were just fire blackened walls. The small backyard was covered with sooty wood and other broken debris.

Ben's heart sank. His hopes of finding anything were dashed. But then he found Billy was not so sure. His friend was picking his way through the yard, careful to avoid falling in the broken material, with big nails sticking up out of the blackened timbers.

Billy shouted, "Look!" He was pointing to a big black barrel that stood in the centre of the yard. Ben picked his way to the barrel but Billy was there first.

He fished around and pulled out a model fire engine, its red paint still clean. The model had its tires and seemed in good shape.

As Billy stood aside grinning over his prize, Ben started reaching into the barrel. He pulled out broken wood and glass but could not see to the bottom. Lucky Billy, he thought. First one there had got the prize.

He was about to give up because he could not reach down the barrel any further. He was standing on tip toes when his fingers came across something he could not see. It felt curved and smooth but something was hanging from it.

Ben carefully worked the object out of the barrel. He looked at what he had found with a happy smile. It was a model aircraft, a bomber painted with the round markings of the RAF on the wings.

One of the wings was broken, just hanging from the body.

Ben knew he had some glue at home so it could be fixed as good as new.

The two boys walked home. Both had blackened hands and dust on their pants. Passersby saw their happy smiling faces and smiled in turn.

Ben turned into the house and washed up and dusted the dirt off his pants. He found the tube of glue and repaired the broken wing.

He washed the bomber and then had an idea. Tomorrow would be Christmas and the bomber from the ruined shop could be his present to himself. The family had a tiny model Christmas tree and he wrapped the precious toy and placed it next to the tree.

His parents would be surprised when he unwrapped the gift he had found in the barrel.

Thoughts of tough times caused by the war were put behind him. He knew this would be the best Christmas ever.

"Fire from the sky" is an autobiographical story by Minden author Michael Barnes. Barnes's latest book is a thriller The Haliburton ISIS Blow Down and it may be found on Amazon Kindle.

Contractors' breakfast

Cordell Carpet hosted their annual contractors' breakfast again this year at their shop in Haliburton. Gifts and giveaways made the morning extra special, with plenty of people coming out to socialize. /LAURA SMITH Staff

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Community Events

Christmas Break Shinny and Public Skating Hours
at the A.J. LaRue Arena:
Shinny: 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
December 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31 & January 2, 3, 5
$5 per person, Full equipment is required
Free Holiday Public Skating: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
December 22, 24, 26, 29, 31 & January 1, 2 & 5
12:00 – 1:30 p.m. – December 27 & January 3
3:00 – 4:30 p.m. – December 23 & 30
have fun be active do it @ Dysart et al
For questions contact: amueller@dysartetal.ca or 705-457-1740 x. 635

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Christmas Eve Service (with choir)
When: Dec. 24, 4 p.m.
Where: Highland Hills United Church, Minden

Christmas Eve Service
When: Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m.
Where: Haliburton United Church, 10 George St. at Pine St., Haliburton
Joint Pastoral Charge Evening Service – Communion and Special Guest Music Artists

Free Public Skating sponsored by Karen Nimigon, Century 21 Granite Realty Group Ltd
When: Friday, Dec. 27, noon - 1:30 p.m.
Where: A. J. LaRue Arena, Haliburton

Free Public Skating sponsored by Karen Nimigon, Century 21 Granite Realty Group Ltd
When: Thursday, Jan. 2, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Where: A. J. LaRue Arena, Haliburton

Free Public Skating sponsored by Karen Nimigon, Century 21 Granite Realty Group Ltd
When: Friday, Jan. 3, noon to 1:30 p.m.
Where: A. J. LaRue Arena, Haliburton

Minden Legion presents Gord Kidd
When: Saturday, Jan.4, 2 to 5 p.m.
Where: Minden Legion
Lunch available to purchase from 12 to 2 p.m., Meat Draw at 1 p.m.

Mike Stevens: Harmonica Virtuoso
When: Thursday, Jan. 9, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Highland Hills United Church, 21 New Castle Street, Minden
What: Breathe in the world. Breathe out the music. In this energetic and interactive family performance with awe inspiring harmonica virtuoso Mike Stevens, discover that music is inside and around us all the time. Presented by Razzamataz Kids' Shows! For more info and tickets visit www.razzamataz.ca/shows/ or contact Dawn Mole-Hurd 705-854-0728

Ladies Auxiliary Sunday Breakfast
When: Sunday, Jan. 12, 9:30 to 1:00 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion, Main Hall
Cost: $6
Menu: Eggs or pancakes, bacon or sausage, hash browns, toast, orange juice, tea/coffee.

Highland Trio in the Clubroom
When: Saturday, Jan. 18, 3 to 6 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion, Clubroom
Cost: $5 cover charge for non-members.*50/50 draw at 6 p.m.

Ripopée by L'Aubergine
When: Sunday, Mar. 1, 2 p.m.
Where: Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion, 5358 Haliburton County Road 21, Haliburton
What: Join four hilarious clowns on their whimsical – and sometimes chaotic – journey. A pure delight for all ages. Presented by Razzamataz Kids' Shows! For more info and tickets visit www.razzamataz.ca/shows/ or contact Dawn Mole-Hurd 705-854-0728

The Incredible Adventures of Mary Jane Mosquito by Tomson Highway
When: Sunday, April 19, 2 p.m.
Where: Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion, 5358 Haliburton County Road 21, Haliburton
What: Mary Jane, the wingless mosquito, learns to make friends by sharing her Cree language, kind heart, and songs with the world. This is a delightfully engaging musical show for younger audiences. Presented by Razzamataz Kids' Shows! For more info and tickets visit www.razzamataz.ca/shows/ or contact Dawn Mole-Hurd 705-854-0728

Recurring Events

Devotional Gatherings
When: Mondays and/or Tuesdays, 2:30 and/or 7 p.m., to be arranged
Where: In homes at Minden, Kennisis Lake, Haliburton
What: Come join us for prayers, meditations and readings; all spiritual traditions are honoured and welcome. An open space for reflection, prayer and sharing for well-being of individuals and the state of the world. "Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth.." Call Kathie/ George at 705-286-3378 or Pat at 416-606-9657

Beginning Dec 5, 7:00 -8:30
The Highland Storytelling Circle meets the first Thursday of the month in the Radio Hall of Canoe FM. Join us with a story or just to listen. No charge, all welcome. For more information call Bob at 705 457 8617.

SMART, safe and gentle exercise for Seniors.
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Haliburton: Parklane Apt. Tuesday, 1 to 2 p.m.
Echo Hills Apt. Thursday, 1 to 2 p.m.
Minden: Hyland Crest Auditorium - Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Classes are free
For more information, contact Cathy Thomas, 705-489-2187 or Carol Browne, 705-457-4551

Grief Support Group Community Support Services
When: 1st Wednesday of Every Month Hyland Crest Auditorium, Minden Hospital 1 to 3 p.m. or 2nd Wednesday of Every Month Abbey Retreat Center, 1150 Garden Gate Drive West Guilford 1 to 3 p.m.
Offering emotional support in a safe and non-judgemental environment
For more information about resources and services, please contact Tel 705-457-2941 x 2932 Email: infocc@hhhs.ca Or visit our website at www.hhhs.ca

Taoist Tai Chi
Stanhope - Stanhope Community Centre
Tuesday 10 a.m. - 11 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Haliburton - Haliburton United Church
Monday 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Thursday 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Kinmount- Galway Community Hall
Monday 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., Thursday 10 a.m. -12 p.m.
For more information please contact Wilma at 705-457-5829 or Taoist.org/Peterborough for schedule of classes

Minden Bible Church Children's and Youth Programs
KidzLife (Mid-Week Kids Program): Every Tuesday, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
MBC Youth (Youth Group): Every Thursday, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
KidzLife ages: Grades JK to Grade 6
MBC Youth ages: Grades 7 to12
All are welcome and invited! Together, we will: learn about the truth and the life in Jesus Christ, play epic games, meet others within the community of Minden, eat snacks, etc.
www.mindenbiblechurch.ca

Morning Glories Fitness
Where: Upstairs, A.J. LaRue Arena, Haliburton
When: Tuesday and Friday mornings, 8:30 a.m. until 9:30 a.m.
Ladies fitness group for all levels
Contact: Jane 705-754-9996

Community Drum Circle
Wednesdays 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre Patio, 23 York St.
Join the community Drum Circle. Instruments available. Beginners welcome. Family-friendly. Each week a volunteer will facilitate the Circle. By donation in support of Haliburton DrumFest

Haliburton: Pickleball
When: Tuesday and Friday evenings from 7 to 9:30 p.m.
Where: Haliburton High School Gym.
Cost is $2 and rackets are provided. Bring clean indoor shoes.
Contact Jennifer Coates 705-749-3787 for further info.

Minden: Pickleball
When: Monday and Wednesday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Where: S.G. Nesbitt Community Centre, Minden
Racquets are provided so all you need are clean indoor shoes.
Cost is $2
Contact: Elisha Weiss, Community Development Coordinator, 705-286-2298 or eweiss@mindenhills.ca

Family Fun Bingo
Every Tuesday at 6 p.m.
At the Kinmount Legion

Harcourt Community Centre
Harcourt Bingo every week on Wednesdays
Doors open at 6:45 and bingo starts at 7:30
Regular euchre night every week on Thursday night at 7 p.m.
The new community centre is also air conditioned.

Kinmount Library
The Friends of the Library group have a monthly book sale at the Kinmount Library the third Saturday of every month.

Al-anon Minden
When; Monday evenings at 7 p.m.
Where: Hyland Crest (north entrance, follow signs inside building), 6 MacPherson, Minden
Details: For relatives and friends of problem drinkers. For more information call 1-888-425-2666

Haliburton Highlands Quilt Guild
When: Second Wednesday of every month from 1 to 4 p.m.
Where: Stanhope Community Centre, 1095 North Shore Rd., Algonquin Highlands
Details: Meeting includes speakers holding trunk shows of their work, often covering new and interesting quilt and sewing techniques. Our group consists of quilters at all levels, who enjoy sharing and learning from each other. Check out our Facebook page or our web site: Facebook.com/haliburtonquilts or www.haliburtonhighlandsquiltguild.com
Contact: Connie Walker 905-439-5943 or haliburtonquilts@gmail.com

Haliburton Highlands Weaving and Spinning Guild Open Studios
Time: Every Tuesday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Place: Haliburton Veterinary Services Building – Back Entrance
No experience needed.
Contact: Pat @ 705-286-6042 or andreacoysh@gmail.com

Dorset Craft Connections Group
When: Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. $1 per person

Haliburton Region Shout Sister! Choir
When: Practices are held Thursday nights from 7 to 9 p.m.
Where: Haliburton United Church, Fellowship Room, 10 George St., Haliburton.
Details: Directed by Laurel McCauley, Welcoming new members. We do not audition and learn our music by ear. All levels of singers are welcome. We sing a fun variety of music from pop and folk to Motown.

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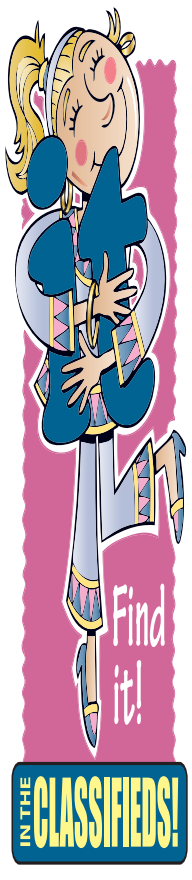

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Letters to Santa

by Gr.3 and 4 students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School

Dear Santa,

I have been ok to my pets. Sometimes, I give them food and water. Sometimes, I move my cat off my Xbox 360. I try not to hurt him.

I help take care of my brother. I bring him to class and I pick him up.

At school, I help get the gym equipment. It is my leadership job. It helps Ms. K. so the class does not have to wait for instructions.

So please give me another Xbox 360 controller so I can play with my friends.

From Nohlan Wrightman

Dear Santa,

I think I have been a good boy this year.

I do chores around the house like washing the dishes and cleaning the house. Doing these things helps my parents around the house.

Some of the people that live close to me are getting older. I help them do things like mow the lawn and shovel the driveway. It's good to help older people because they are hurt.

I help my parents. I carry groceries into the house and I help pick them out at the grocery store.

And that is why I have been a good boy this year.

Love Moss Peter Davis

Dear Santa,

I have been nice this year.

I help my mom with cleaning the house. I do the dishes and put them away. I also sweep if guests come so they feel welcome.

Another reason I am nice is that I am very patient, calm, and understanding. One time, my mom forgot about a summer camp and I understood. I was okay.

The last reason to prove that I'm nice is that I am helpful. One time, I helped a friend when I was in grade three with her math. I also clean up the classroom at the end of the day.

Those are some of the reasons why I'm nice. I hope that I have convinced you that I'm nice.

Love Eden

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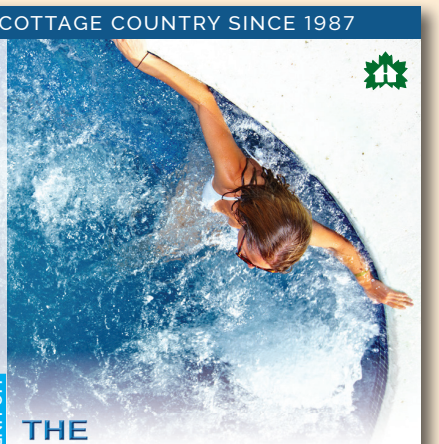

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The Haliburton Real Estate Team

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Drag Lake $499,000 7.24AC
Colborne Lake $289,000 4.83AC
Contau Lake $165,000 1.33AC
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Contau Lake Road $49,000 3.91AC
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Wenona Lake $40,000 0.42AC
Fred Jones Road $25,000 0.38AC

Seasons Greetings From

The Haliburton Real Estate Team

We wish you the very best as 2019 comes to an end and look forward to good health & prosperity in the New Year!

Linda, Karen, Kim & Alyssa

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Highlights

Only in Canada

Those upset about the Health Minister's call for another health care study might be amused by some of the questions in her new Health Status Survey. Arthur Black gives us the inside story on page 4.

Sewer expansion

The Minister of the Environment will decide the fate of Dysart's sewage treatment plant expansion project in early January. Please see page 10.

Sale of Village Green is delayed

The sale of Minden's Village Green has been delayed until January 11 in order that the township can prepare a by-law to dispose of the property.

The deal was supposed to have been completed last week, but Reeve Ray Moore told *The Times* Thursday that because a by-law was never prepared the sale can't be finalized until the next council meeting.

Minden accountant Gary Thurston has an offer on the property and it was on his suggestion that the sale is being delayed. Moore said that because the township passed by-laws for the sale of other property, Thurston felt one should be passed for the Village Green as well.

The sale includes the downtown parkette located beside the CIBC and the 20-space municipal parking lot which fronts on Peck Street.

It was just like an old style Christmas outing last Wednesday in Dorset as students from the elementary school and dozens of others set out on a sleigh ride through the village singing Christmas Carols. One of the stops along the route was at the Dorset United Church. The ride started out at the school and wound up back at the community centre about an hour later, where baked goods and hot drinks were served.

Health study will let us have our say

by Jay Kerr-Wilson

The study of Haliburton County's long-term health care requirements will give local people a chance to tell the province what those requirements should be, says the chairman of the steering committee formed to conduct the study.

"Other studies told residents what was needed," says Maureen Dikun of the District Health Council. "This study will let residents tell us what they want."

The first meeting of the committee was held at Hyland Crest last Tuesday, and afterwards Dikun met with the two local papers to discuss the study.

The study's aim is to determine the long-term health needs of Haliburton County. It is a joint project of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Commercial and Social Services.

The study is the first phase of the plan. Dikun says it should be completed by June at which time implementation of the committee's recommendation will begin.

Of particular interest to local residents is the fate of the proposed 18-bed chronic care facility planned for the Haliburton Hospital. One of the outcomes of the study will be to determine whether those beds are necessary or if the need can be met with other measures.

Funding for the expansion was approved by the Ministry of Health as part of an $850 million initiative to create 4,400 new beds.

Since that time, the Ministry of Health has frozen the funding for the capital projects and has ordered a review of the province's health care needs.

The aim of the review is to shift health services away from hospital beds and institutions and towards keeping people in their own homes longer.

This review left the Haliburton Hospital expansion without any government funding just as the project was ready for construction to begin.

Despite a strong public lobby to have

(more on page 6)

Board hopes to build new schools

by Jay Kerr-Wilson

The Haliburton County Board of Education has revised its long- and short-term plans to deal with the growing need for classroom space for elementary students.

Included in the short-term list are more portables at Archie Stouffer Elementary School and taking back space that has previously been rented to Sir Sandford Fleming College.

The board has developed two options for dealing with the county's long-term accommodation needs. The first option involves the construction of two new kindergarten to Grade 3 schools, one in Haliburton and the other in Minden. The second option is to build a new Kindergarten to Grade 8 school to serve both communities.

These recommendations reflect a change in attitude for the board which has, in recent years, pinned its hopes on additions to existing school buildings.

Last Wednesday, the board released a statement outlining its accommodation needs for elementary schools.

"During the last three years elementary school enrolment has increased by just under 300 students," the statement says. "From September 1988 to September 1989 the increase was approximately 10 per cent. Much of this growth took place in the Haliburton and Minden school zones.

"The greatest increase is in the primary grades and, as such, will continue to require

(more on page 2)

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